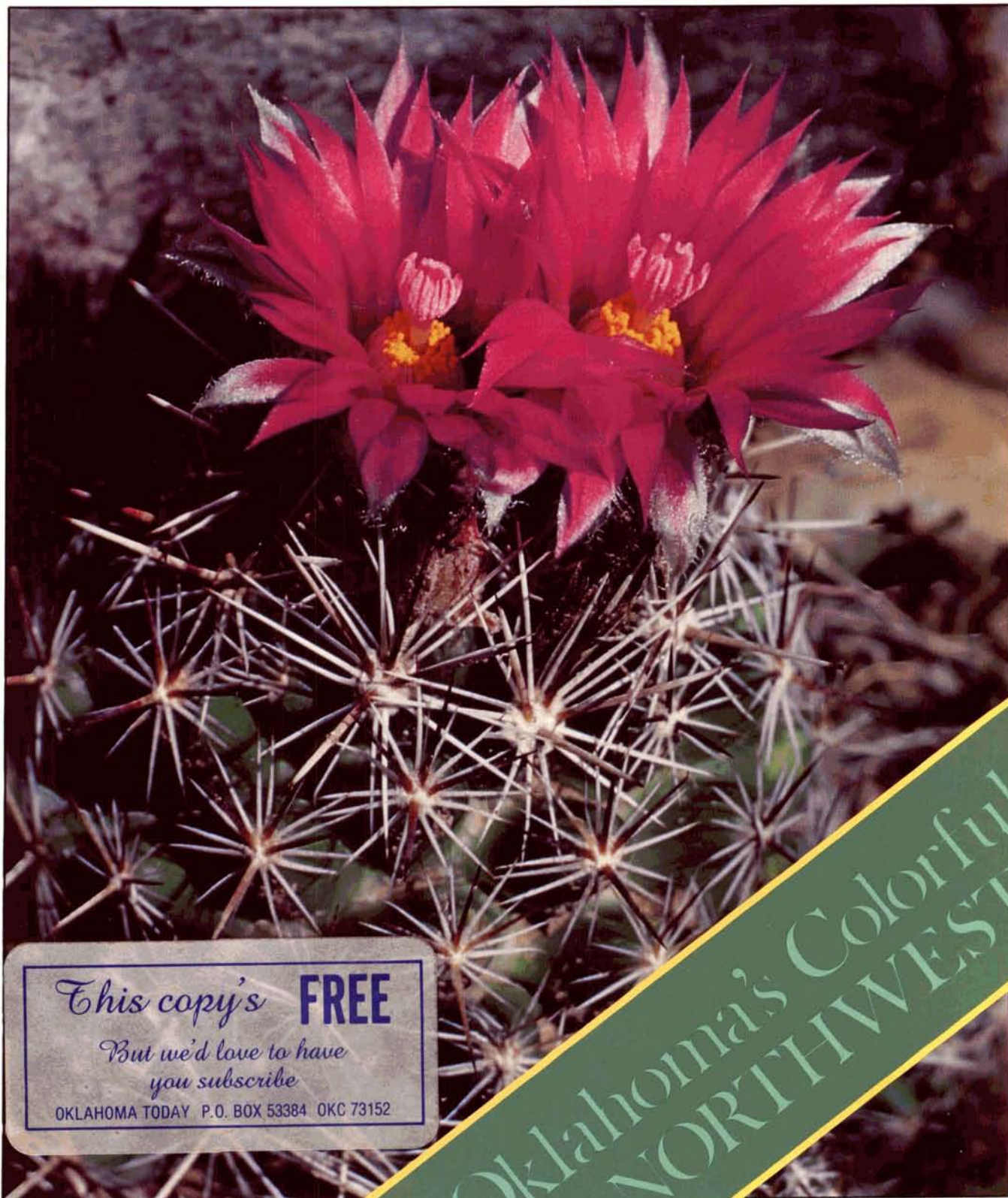


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IN THE SUMMER ISSUE, we'll be going on
the road to show you how some Sooners spend
their summer time — peach growers, peach fan-
ciers and peach festivals at Porter and Strat-
ford; sailboarding on Lake Keystone; the Steam
Threshers Association show in Pawnee; and the
event that's spelled *summer* to thousands of
Oklahomans, church camp at Falls Creek. All in
the next issue of *Oklahoma Today* magazine.

SPRING 1983



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Photographs that capture the character of Oklahoma's
northwestern territory.

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A Cowboy's Life

The branding iron's heated in a propane flame, and some ranchers
ride their range in helicopters. Still, the heart of a cowboy's life
stays constant.

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At Alabaster Caverns State Park, a secret kingdom lies just beneath
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All about a boy, his dad, his granddad, a spring hunt for wild
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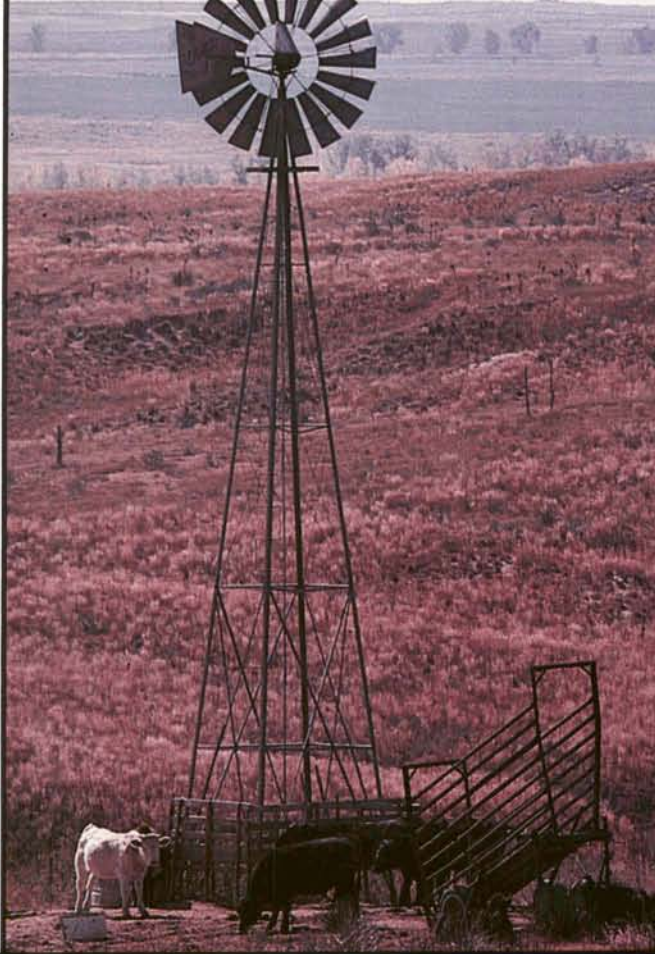
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COVERS: *Front.* Ball cactus in bloom, Cimarron County. Photo by Joseph
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Jim Argo. *Back.* Raccoon up a tree, Boiling Springs State Park. Photo by Larry
D. Brown.

THREE



Clockwise, from left.
Mountains of fodder at the Hitch Ranch, near Guymon. Photo by Paul E. Lefebvre.
Windmill and cattle, Beaver County. Photo by Jim Argo.
Rabbits in springtime meadow, near Woodward. Photo by Larry D. Brown.
Primrose and dew, Boiling Springs State Park. Photo by Larry D. Brown.
 Right, *Road to the mesa country, Cimarron County. Photo by Fred W. Marvel.*

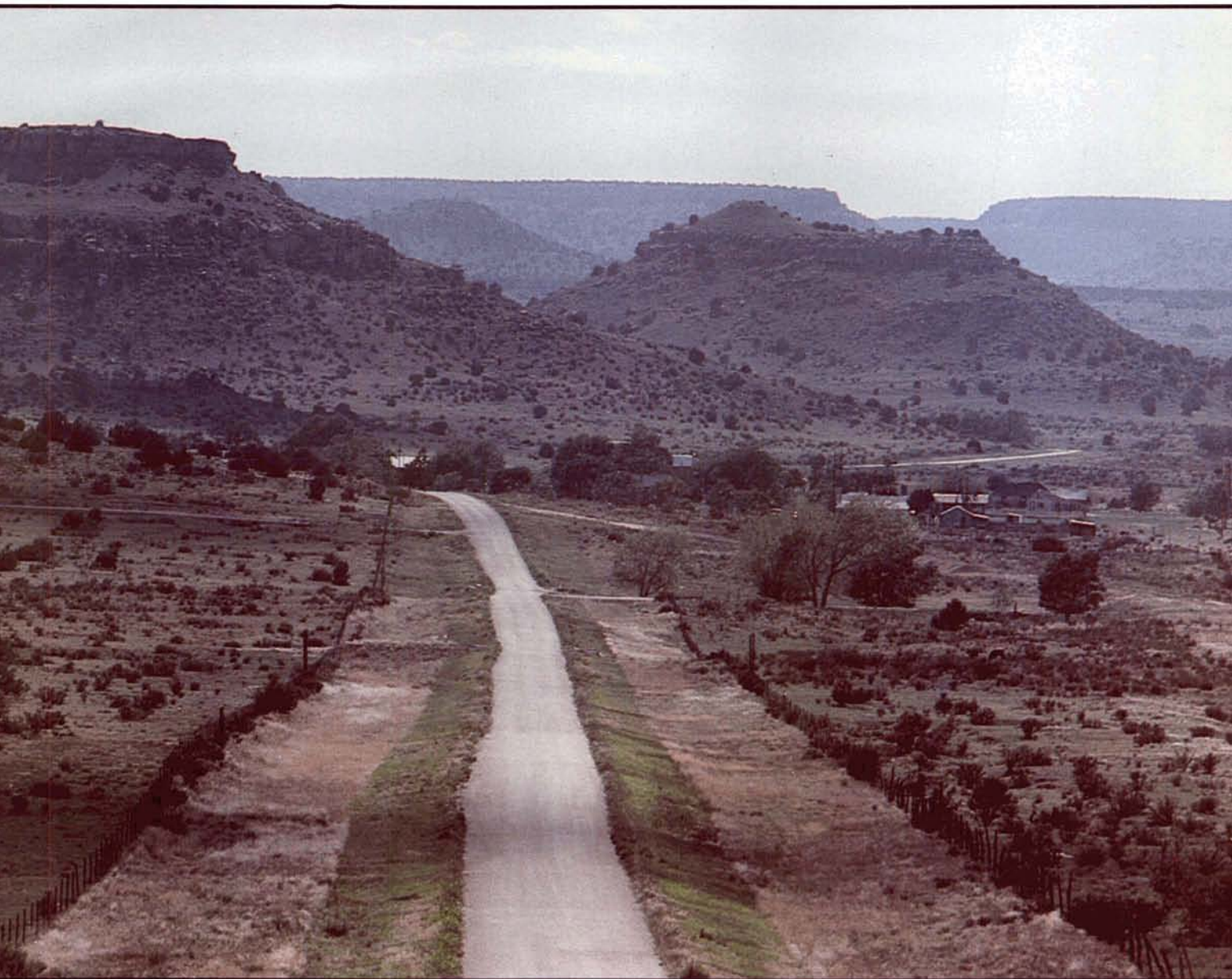
The Spirit of the Place...

A character in Angie Debo's *Prairie City* says it: "Ever thin' that iver happened anywhere happened in Marshall, Oklahoma." It may be no coincidence that the author herself lives in Marshall, Oklahoma, but the truth's still there. Any generalization, any platitude about Oklahoma's northwest and the people who live there will leave out more than it takes in.

True, there are mesas and flat land and worlds of sagebrush and shinnery rolling away to the sky. But there are also some of the world's largest gypsum caves, the world's first upstream flood-control project, the deepest gas wells, fields of milo and wheat and alfalfa, wide river valleys and meadows of wildflowers every spring.

True, the people work as ranchers and roustabouts and dryland farmers. But they're also doctors and lawyers and merchants and artists and writers—people who could go anywhere, but choose to stay in Enid and Weatherford and Cheyenne and Woodward and Boise City and the wide-open country in between.

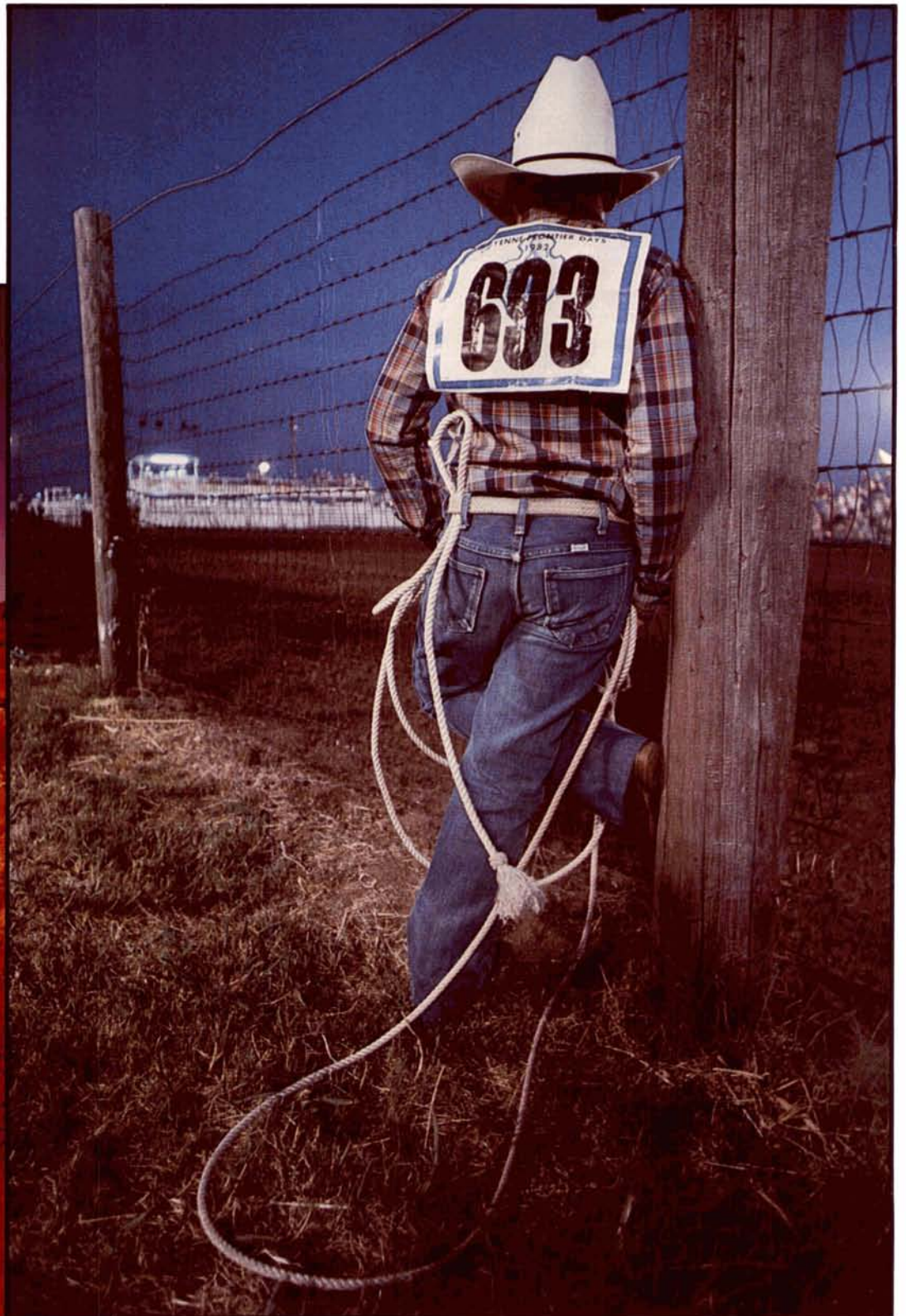
It may be only coincidence, but when you drive northwest from the city, it seems you breathe just a little deeper. The land opens like a hand, various, surprising, full of character. And wherever you go, you meet people who seem at home there.





Clockwise, from above.
*Oilwell in silhouette, near
 Elk City. Photo by Jim Argo.*
*Young bushtits on a branch,
 near Kenton. Photo by Joseph
 A. Grzybowski. Horses,
 sagebrush and wildflowers,
 Beaver County. Photo by Kris
 Erickson. Glass Mountain
 panorama, near Fairview.
 Photo by Jim Argo.*

*Dressed up like his daddy.
101 Ranch Rodeo, Ponca City.
Photo by Jim Argo.*



My alarm clock went off at 4:30. I swung my legs over the side of the bed, found my boots and jeans and shirt in the darkness, and tiptoed through the trailer house, taking care not to wake the children.

I dressed and started the coffee, then walked out on the porch. Off in the trees along the Beaver River, wild turkeys and peafowls squabbled back and forth, alerting their own kind that I had stepped into their world.

I filled my chest with air sweetened by the blooms of locust trees, wild grapes and sandhill plums, and overlaid with the indescribable smell of green grass. It was springtime in Beaver County, and the mere smell of it left me tingling with excitement.

I walked a dark path down to the barn, a path I had memorized long before, and fed my horse two coffee can-fulls of rolled oats. In the saddle-room I lifted the sheet that covered last fall's buck and carved a couple of nice little breakfast steaks off the haunch. The deer had hung all winter, improving with age, and it was just about gone.

Back at the house I sipped hot coffee, turned on the radio to catch the morning weather report and cooked up my favorite cowboy breakfast: venison steak fried in butter, and two eggs.

Breakfast done, I put on my shotgun chaps, big rowel spurs, leather vest and black felt hat, switched off the lights, left the house in peaceful sleep and walked back down to the barn, enjoying the music of my spurs.

I saddled my horse in a square of light thrown through the open saddle-room door, tied my Army-surplus slicker behind the cante and led Little John to the stock trailer, which I had hitched to the pickup the night before. I had learned through bitter experience that hitching up the trailer in the dark was a bad way to start a roundup morning.

Lights on, window down, the radio playing country music from Tulsa, I pointed the four-wheel drive up the hill, rattled across the cattleguard and gathered speed on the wide, sandy road.

Climbing into the sandhills that rolled northward from the valley of the Beaver River, I caught the aroma

A Cowboy's Life,

By John R. Erickson
Photographs by Kris Erickson

The Ericksons have firsthand knowledge of ranching in the Panhandle, having lived the life of a cowboy and a cowboy's wife in Beaver County. They now live in Perryton, Texas. He's the author of The Modern Cowboy and Panhandle Cowboy; Kris shot the pictures for Modern Cowboy.



Spring roundup in the Oklahoma Panhandle. Before you can brand a calf, you have to get it to the branding fire.

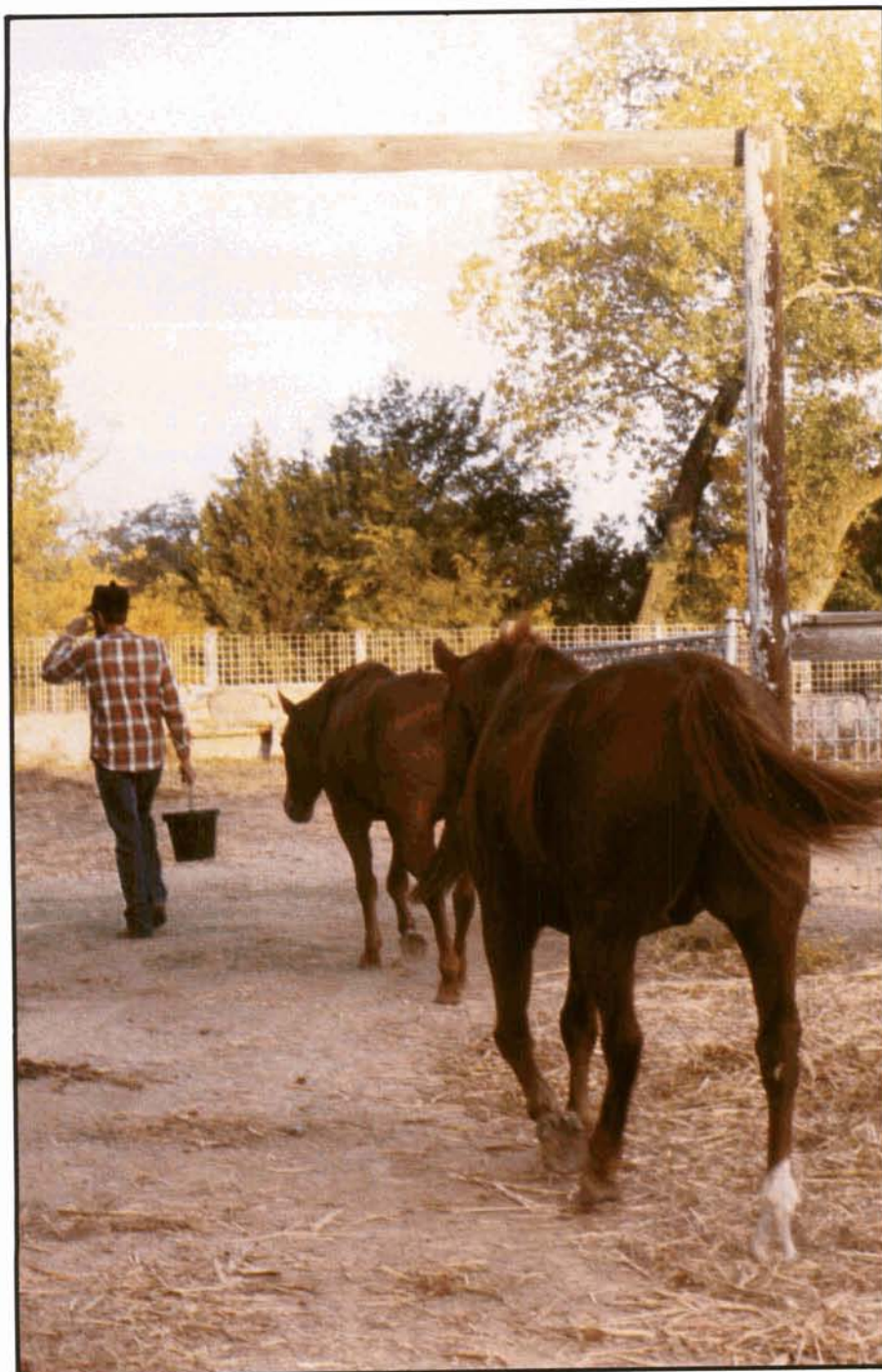
Changing and Unchanged





John Erickson and Jake Parker, a Three Cross Ranch cowboy, handle a grown cow with two ropes and two horses.

Erickson at horse-feeding time on the John Little Ranch in Beaver County.



of sagebrush and saw the first purple glow of daylight on the eastern horizon. It was a good day to be alive. It was a good place to be a cowboy.

We drove north, Little John and I, splitting the springtime air, through the sandhills and into the shortgrass country that separated the Beaver and Cimarron watersheds, past ranch and farm houses where kitchen windows glowed yellow and showed families preparing for school and work.

Just outside of Knowles, a little Katy Railroad village struggling to survive without the Katy, I eased my pickup off the road and parked in a grassy spot beside four other pickup-trailer rigs. Another pulled in right behind me.

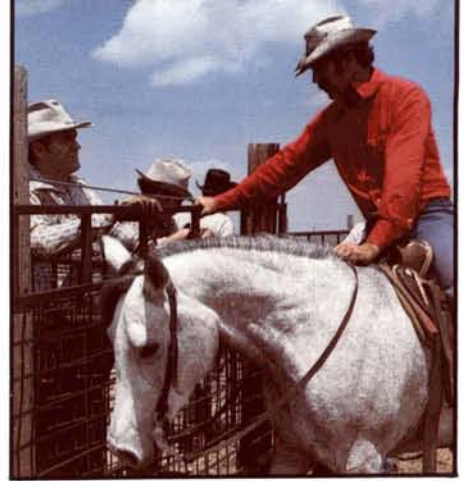
I stepped out, stretched my legs and walked over to the red four-wheel drive where the other cowboys had gathered around a Thermos of coffee. Hobart and Carl and Kary and Darrell were there from the Open A; Stanley and Pat and Glen from the Bar B; Jake from the Three Cross; and me from the LD Bar.

We sipped coffee from styrofoam cups and waited for the red bud of sun to bloom. We talked horses and roping and weather and teased Hobart because he was such a grouch in the morning.

The sun popped over the horizon and began burning away the night mist. "Let's go," someone said. We loaded nine horses into Darrell's big gooseneck trailer, and the six of us who didn't fit into the cab crawled into the back of the pickup.

And off we went to the Cimarron River, that rough country where Fred Tainter had started his ranch in the

*Taking a breather. Mark Mayo
of Beaver County's YL Ranch.*



1880s and had built an old rock barn. The Tainters were gone now but the barn was still standing, embraced by vines and partly hidden by weeds and trees in a secret valley that had probably not been seen by more than a hundred people in as many years.

Tainter's cowboys had saddled their horses by lantern light and had lived carefree, bachelor-happy lives there in the valley. By the time I saw the rock barn where they had stored their saddles and horse feed, they had all crossed the divide, leaving hardly a trace behind, only the stubborn bois d'arc posts they had planted in the ground and the few ancient strands of barbed wire they had strung.

I was of a new generation. I carried a nylon rope on my saddle and a plug of cellophane-wrapped tobacco in my chaps pocket. My boots were store-bought, mass produced by the Nocona Boot Co. I had chosen my clothes that morning on the strength of a radio weather forecast compiled by computers in Kansas City.

Our lunch that day did not come out of a chuck box or a dutch oven, and it was not cooked over mesquite coals. We ate hamburgers prepared at Rosa's Cafe in Gate and brought out to us in a Lincoln car driven by the roundup boss's wife. We washed the hamburgers down with canned soda pop.

When the branding work began, we heated our irons on a propane fire, injected the calves with a vaccine gun made of stainless steel and glass, and that evening we hauled our horses back to our home ranches at 50 miles an hour.

Mr. Tainter's cowboys might have snorted at our new-fangled ways. They would have choked on the news that

one of the men who rode with us that day in 1979 is now using a helicopter to find cattle in the tamaracks along the Beaver River.

I imagine they would have judged us soft and spoiled, mere shadows of *real* cowboys. That is often the judgment one generation levels against the next. What is real is what *they* did, and anything that follows and changes is perceived as poor imitation.

Maybe so. Those old guys earned the right to be a little condescending toward those of us who came behind. They were tough. They starved and shivered and sweated and paid a heavy price for their way of life. They were good at what they did, and many of them, had they had the choices we have today, would have excelled as bank officers, engineers, executives and politicians.

But it also seems a bit unfair to judge today's cowboy by yesterday's standards and to interject that hateful little word *real*. Today's cowboy is as real as he needs to be, real enough to get his job done and earn his wages—which is about all the old-timers were trying to do.

The modern cowboy dresses somewhat differently (probably in better, warmer clothes), has taken on a few new habits (snuff instead of Bull Durham), has adopted a slightly different style of roping (which was perfected in the arena, not on the ranch) and, instead of baching in a covered hole dug into the side of a hill, he is likely to have a family and live in a tenant house or mobile home.

And, yes, his horse spends a lot of time riding in a stock trailer, but that pickup and trailer have increased his range, tripled or quadrupled the

amount of country he can look after and allowed him to do the work formerly done by two or three men.

Cowboys have changed because they've *had* to change, because the medium in which they live and operate—ranching—is a business enterprise which, like most businesses, either responds to economic forces or disappears. Ranching is the art and science of converting grass into beef. If the American public ever stops eating beef, the cowboy will vanish just as quickly as the fur trapper or the steamboat captain.

That isn't likely to happen any time soon, and maybe it never will, but in the meantime the cowboy must roll with the times and, like the rest of us, make a few compromises.

I think there is something inside most Americans which makes us want to keep the cowboy as he used to be, since the cowboy, even more than Uncle Sam or the bald eagle, has come to symbolize what we are as a people. The cowboy, in other words, *means* more than he *is*. He has become a repository for our national self-image. He is what we would like to be: strong, courageous, self-sufficient, honest and hardworking.

Funny, but those were some of the very qualities I admired in the men I worked with in Beaver County in 1979, even though they drove pickups with two-way radios, and some wore baseball caps instead of Stetsons. That makes me think that the cowboy hasn't been corrupted as much as some people might suppose.

And it makes me think that what was most *real*, if we must use that word, about the old-time cowboys can still be found on ranches today, where-

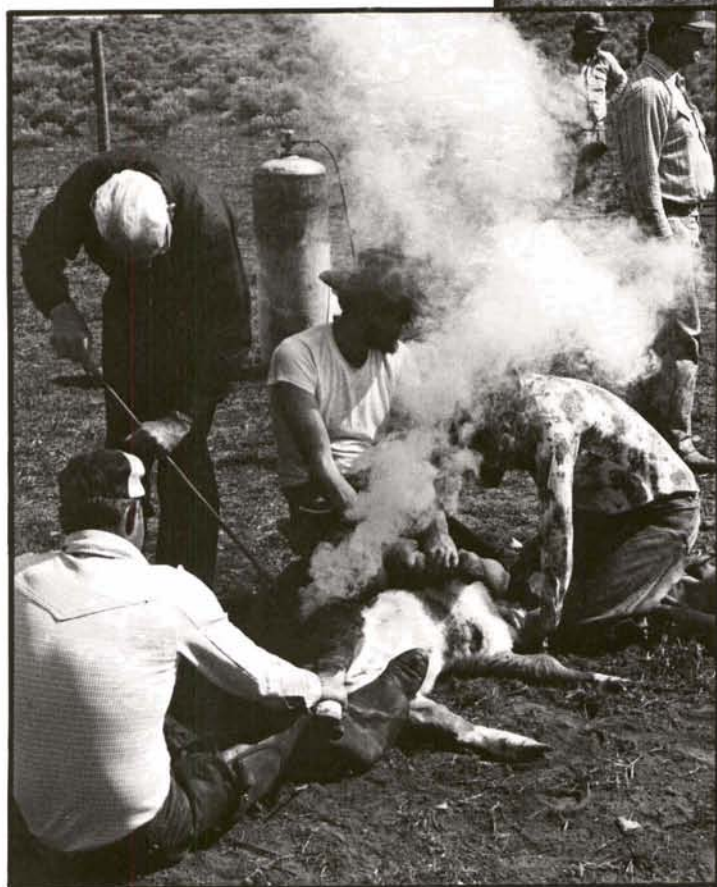
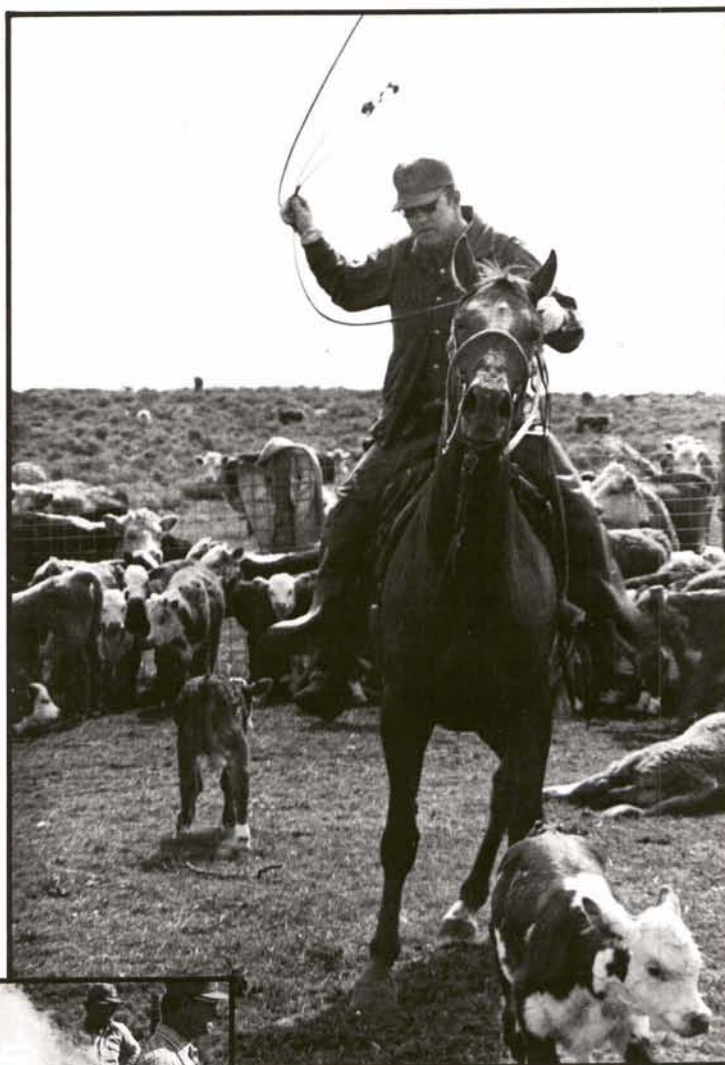
ever men are training young horses and following the cow.

It has to do, not so much with their outward appearance, but in their devotion to a way of life. It's a hard life, just as hard on the women who stay at home in isolated ranch houses as on the men who ride out into the heat and cold. It demands much and offers little in financial reward, but those who are called to it are willing to pay the price.

I can't define exactly what it is that calls a young man into this life or persuades his wife to leave the convenience of town living and go to the wilderness. But it's in me. It comes back every time I return to Beaver County and catch that haunting aroma of sagebrush in the morning air.

I don't cowboy any more. Like many in the profession, I reached the age

Right. Stanley Barby takes out after a calf. Below. Branding's still a tradition, but some things about it have changed. For instance, propane from the bottle in the background now provides the heat for the branding iron.



of 37, took a hard look at my hole card, and decided that there were other things I wanted to do.

But I admire those who have stayed with it, toughed it out and made it work. And I hope that when he gets old enough, my boy has a chance to ride those old sandhills along the Beaver River and maybe catch a glimpse of old man Tainter's rock barn.

If he does, I bet he'll never forget it. I know I won't. OT

Alabaster Caverns



Jim Argo

Another World, Underground

Deep, dark and damp, one of the world's largest gypsum caves twists and tunnels its way for more than half a mile beneath the Oklahoma prairie—stark contrast to the windy plains and wide sky 80 feet above.

Alabaster Caverns. Except for cement steps and worn footpaths, you might not even notice the hillside holes where the earth has opened, allowing humans to enter.

But the Indians found them. So did the region's early settlers. And so did the outlaws. Local legend has it that posses riding through these parts checked the caves regularly for the Dalton gang and other desperados.

Old gunny sacks of bat guano, salt deposits, ceremonial Indian artifacts, rotting U.S. cavalry saddles left by horse thieves, marks of the saw blades used to harvest alabaster and even the remnants of fallout shelter supplies give clues to ways the caverns have served humans over the years.

Today, as a state park, the caverns show their secrets to about 30,000 visitors each year.

Located on SH 50 between Mooreland and Freedom, Alabaster Caverns is part of a large system of caves honeycombing northwestern Oklahoma. It's one of the few caves with openings to the surface, says park supervisor Bill Robinson.

As we descend into one of those openings, the musty, pungent odor is what strikes us first. Then the soft squeaking of a bat.

"These used to be called the Bat Caves," our guide, Amy Stewart, says. Like the other historical property site attendants, Amy is a native of the area. She recalls a time when visitors entered the cave with lanterns. The only other lights were the few powered by a battery-operated generator. Amy also remembers touring the cave as a



Scott Shalaway

child and crawling or stooping to get past some difficult spots.

That was before the state purchased the caverns in 1953. Since then, adequate lighting and a good foot trail have been installed.

We make our way past the Rotunda Room, with its 50-foot ceiling, and wind around huge alabaster boulders. Amy uses her flashlight to point out the geodes fastened like so many mud dauber's nests to the rocks above. Some are cut in half where an ancient stream washed right through them.

But where are the stalagmites and stalactites—those sandcastle-like formations created by limestone deposits in dripping water that many consider mandatory cave accoutrements?

"This is a gypsum cave," Amy replies. She explains that 200 million years ago, the area was covered by an inland sea. As the water receded or

evaporated, it left behind huge gypsum deposits. Underground streams and rainwater slowly dissolved the soft gypsum, leaving the caves.

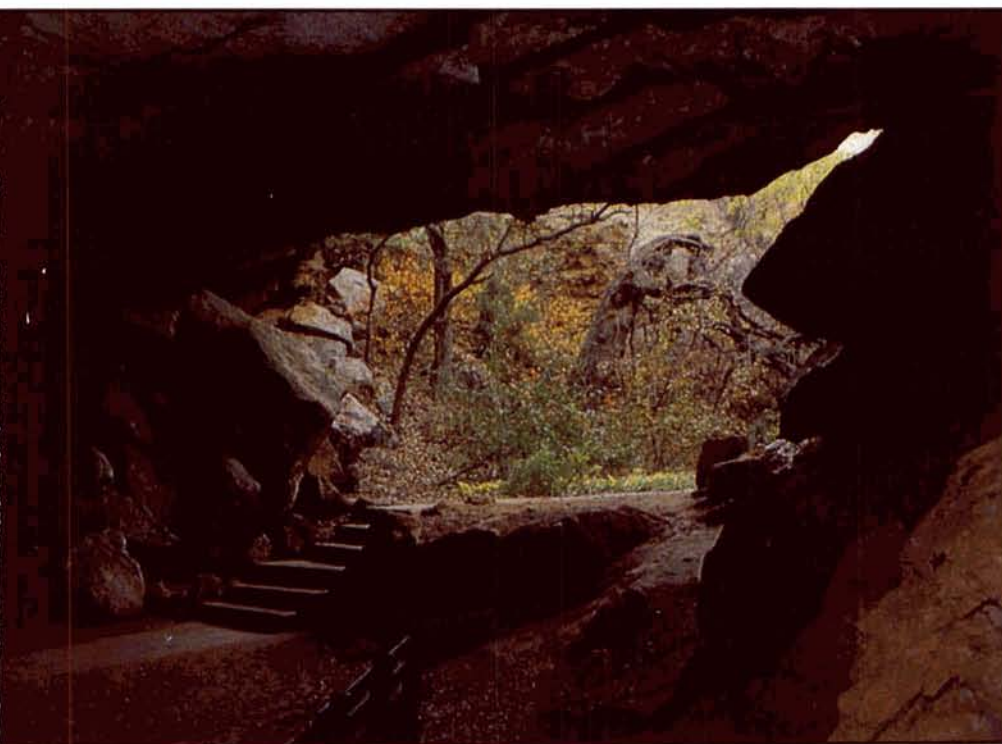
Several types of gypsum can be seen here. Alabaster is one type. Alabaster is very fine-grained, translucent gypsum that's easily carved.

Selenite, a transparent crystal, is another form of gypsum. Amy shines her flashlight behind a huge chunk of selenite, and it glows as if on fire. "People are most impressed by the colorful crystals in this cave," she says. She adds that because the crystal can be broken off in thin sheets, it was often used for window glass in the early settlers' soddies.

By this time, the underground stream we noticed shortly after entering the cave has crisscrossed our path several times. It parallels the path for a short way, and we pause to look into

By Linda D. F. Shalaway

Linda Shalaway, who took her first trip underground in Alabaster Caverns in order to write this story, lives in Stillwater.



Fred W. Marvel

the clear water.

"This is the same stream that helped carve out the caverns," Amy says. She points to the horizontal ridges on the wall above us, evidence of the stream in a much earlier time. Today the continual carving action of the stream combined with the rainwater seeping through from the surface continues to keep the caverns "alive" and constantly changing.

The spring-fed stream serves another purpose as well. It's a life support system for a variety of cave creatures: crayfish, spiders, cave crickets, frogs and salamanders. Amy knows where to look, and we soon spot two brilliant tiger salamanders.

The stream disappears again under a low ledge as the trail veers right to Gun Barrel Tunnel. Here a rounded passage was formed as the rock washed away. "Years ago, people had to crawl on their knees and stomach through Gun Barrel Tunnel," Amy says.

We take the manmade detour around it.

A short way from the tunnel is a side shoot Amy calls Devil's Kitchen. The narrow passage is usually off

limits to visitors, but Amy gives us her flashlight and invites us to take a look.

Curiosity overcomes my fear of tight places. The passageway becomes so short that I have to stoop, but I have an irrepressible urge to see what is behind each bend. I think I understand now the thrill that spelunkers—cave explorers—must feel with each new discovery.

Soon we come to a point where we cannot continue without crawling. I turn back. But not without turning off the flashlight to experience total darkness. The silence is as primal as a scream. I hurry back to where Amy waits patiently.

For experienced spelunkers there are four "wild caves" located within the park. According to Bill Robinson, the Central Oklahoma Grotto Club has mapped these caves, marking them as far as a human can crawl. Club members also guide tours, but he stresses that the wild caves are accessible only to experienced cavers.

"There's Devil's Bathtub," Amy points out as we continue. "See the ring around the tub and drainhole here

at the bottom." Earlier she had shown us a selenite "mouse" and an alabaster "elephant."

Every rock, every formation suggests an image to Amy. "People see faces and forms in the rocks," she says. "They're kind of like the clouds. I see things a little differently each time I'm in here."

Perhaps the best example is Imagination Rock, which looks like a fish to some people, an elephant, alligator or arrow to others. "And for people who just can't see anything, I tell them it looks like a rock about to fall," she says, grinning.

"Look back," she keeps urging us.



Getting There

Alabaster Caverns State Park, just off SH 50 between Mooreland and Freedom, is open every day of the year except Christmas. Guided tours of the caverns, the park's featured attraction, run on the hour, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (8 to 4 in the winter). Group tours can be arranged by calling a week in advance.

The 200-acre park also offers diversions above the ground. Visitors can hike in Cedar Canyon, take a short but strenuous stroll to see the Natural Bridge on the other side of the canyon, swim, camp and picnic. For more information, call (405) 621-3381.

If you'd like to learn more about the caverns before you go, send for the Oklahoma Geological Survey's Guidebook 15. The 38-page book discusses the geology of Alabaster Caverns; recreational facilities at the caverns, Boiling Springs State Park and Fort Supply Reservoir; the history of Woodward County; and the eight species of bats that make the cave their home. Order the guidebook from the Oklahoma Geological Survey, 830 Van Vleet Oval, Norman, OK 73019. The price is \$1.



Tiger salamanders may not rival bats as famous cave creatures, but they're common sights in the caverns.

Photo by Bob Jenni.

"You get a whole different perspective on the cave."

She's right.

Suddenly we're startled by something whizzing by overhead. "Just a bat," Amy responds to our slightly spooked stares. We had seen many bats hanging in cracks and crevices and heard them squeaking throughout the cave, but this is the first one seen flying.

Bats are one of the cave's most interesting features. Thousands use the

caverns for roosting and hibernation. On a summer night, long columns of the animals can be seen emerging from the cave mouth to forage for insects.

According to Bill, bats eat close to their own weight in insects each night. "Some people are afraid of them, but not many," he says. "We explain that bats are insect eaters and tell them that unless they have bugs in their hair, there's nothing to worry about."

Most common of the eight bat species found in the area is the Cave

Myotis. Perhaps most interesting is the Mexican Free-tailed bat. There's evidence to suggest this species migrates from Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico.

The bats are not as plentiful as they once were. Chemical insecticides and disturbed habitat have taken their toll. But careful measures are taken at the park to ensure the environment remains stable. Certain roosting areas are left unlit, and lights are always turned out when no one is in the cave.

Toward the end of our tour we come to Graffiti Hall, where the earliest visitors left evidence of their underground adventure. The names of long-ago tourists are scratched in rock throughout the cave, but most of them are concentrated here. The oldest verified name is Orland Moon, who recorded his visit on May 1, 1900. "Many of the names were folks from around here who people still remember," Amy says.

At the other end of Graffiti Hall is a fork in the trail.

"Now if you had come on a tour with Mr. Wilson in the '30s or '40s, you would have gone that way," Amy says, pointing to a short passage; we'd have to stoop under some rocks to follow it. She explains that Roy Wilson ran tours for the cavern's last private owner, Charles Grass. "We still let the children go through there," she adds.

Just before the trail ends at the surface, we come to a gigantic slab of rock partially blocking the path.

"This was the most recent rock to fall," Amy explains. "It was in 1973. And luckily, it was at night."

She adds that a seismograph now located in the park office registers any earth movement and could detect fallen rock.

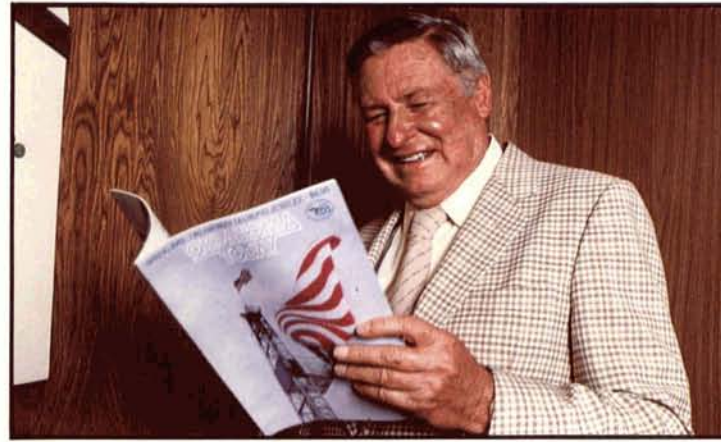
We emerge from the cavern's south end, through another natural entrance. We've been under ground long enough that for a little while it's the wind and the wide sky that seem strange, and our eyes are dazzled by the prairie sun.

OT

All that beckons isn't underground at Alabaster Caverns State Park. Cedar Canyon holds a hiking trail and a chance to visit the park's natural bridge. Photo by Jim Argo.



WILL ROGERS, JR.



Dear Friend,

My father once wrote, "Oklahoma is the Eden of the world." But then, thinking it over, he added, "until a better one comes along."

Dad had a point.

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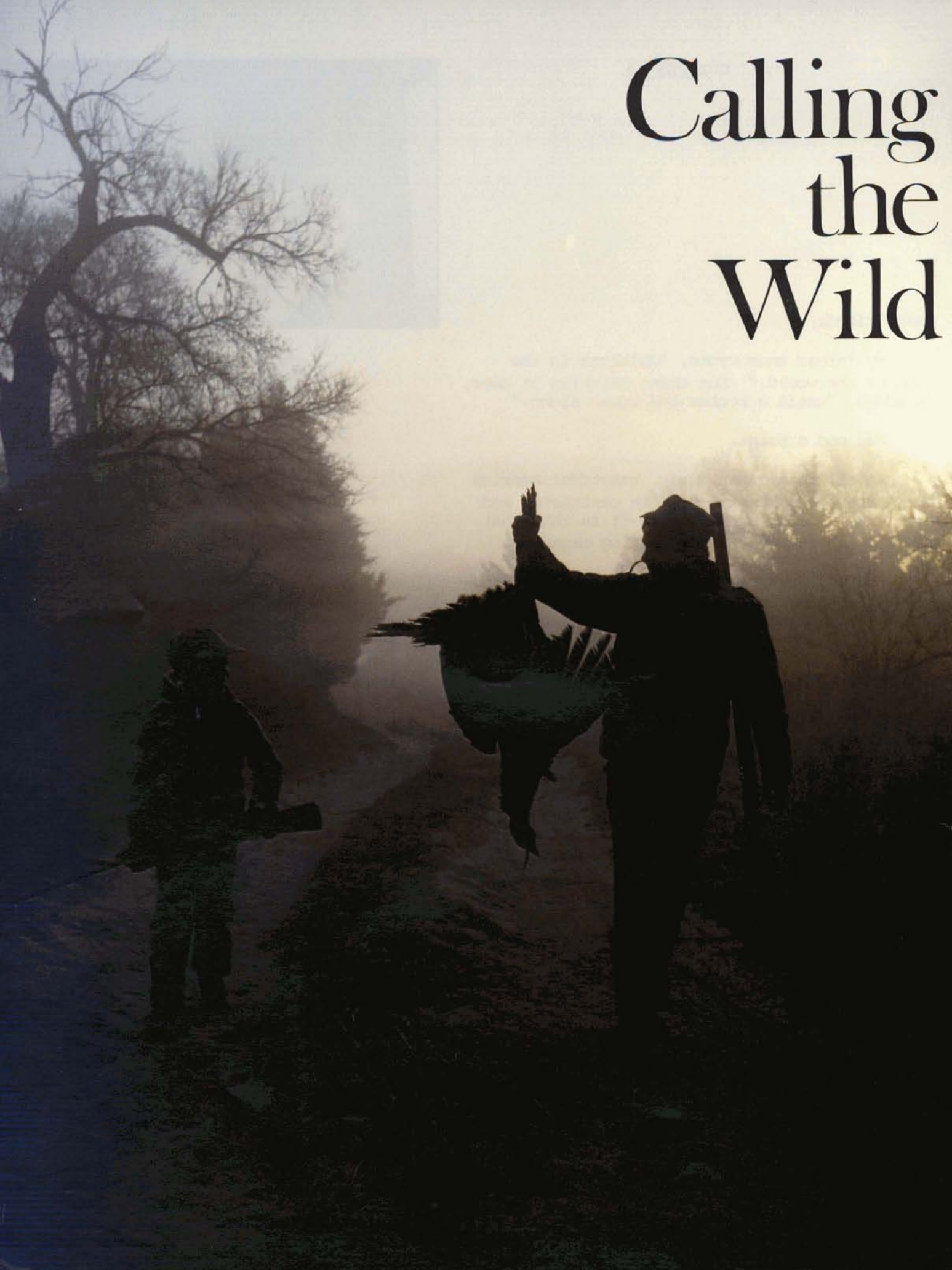
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Calling the Wild



By Dwain Bland

Dwain Bland, who lives in Enid, has been introduced as "the legendary turkey hunter from Oklahoma" on trips he's made back east.

When you hunt turkey along the North Canadian, a lot of history hunts with you.

Yawk, yawk, yawk. I struck the sounding edge of the big Latham box a few quick licks, making the notes of a wild turkey hen when she's got boyfriends in mind. Hunkered down behind the short, thick trunk of a plains cottonwood, I took care to hold the shufflin' box behind the tree, giving the notes as a muffled sound, as if the turkey was back of cover. None of my moves would be visible out toward the open sandhills where the turkey was. The Chickasaw plum bushes were in bloom.

Gooble-ooble-ooble-oble. Yep, he was coming. Some gobblers fiddle around no end of time in coming to a call, but this wasn't one of them. He was closing the distance fast.

I didn't dare risk looking around the tree, for although the low-hanging cottonwood limbs and the cedar boughs seemed to offer plenty of cover, I didn't want to mess up Steven's chances.

Clack. No mistaking; that was the sound of the hammer being cocked on my grandson's little .410 singleshot. Steven wasn't yet strong enough to thumb it back with his hands, so I knew his daddy, Tom Preston, was doing that job for him. The three of us had heard the gobbler "cutting up" earlier in the timber lining the North Canadian River, which was winding

its way across western Oklahoma a couple of hundred yards from us. A quick parley, and we'd decided that if I hid behind the old cottonwood, while Tom and Steven took up hiding just in front of it in a clump of small cedars, perhaps I could call the bird to us.

A gorgeous spring morning, no wind, and the sun was just peeping through a cut in the rugged sandhills to our east. April is turkey hunting

time in Oklahoma. Luckily, a long-dead log lay sandwiched among the cedars, giving Tom and Steven something to lean back against while they awaited the hoped-for sight of the gobbler coming to my calling. If Granddad was good enough, perhaps Steven would get a crack at the bird. Four-ten gauge shotguns aren't anyone's idea of the ideal turkey gun, but the boy was too small for a larger gun. The gobbler would have to be close, inside 15 yards, for the little 2½-inch shell to be lethal.

In jig time, I cranked up the turkey to where he was gobbling each time I'd strike the paddle against the box's sounding edge. But the gobble was purty sorry, with not much gobble and lots of croak. Undoubtedly the bird was what turkey hunters call a



Larry D. Brown

Getting There

The spring wild turkey season opens April 6 and runs until the first day of May this year. Detailed regulations, including open and closed areas, are available from local license dealers or from the Department of Wildlife Conservation, 1801 N. Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK 73105. If you order the booklet from the department, enclose \$1 for postage and handling; it's free from the dealers.

Prime public areas for spring turkeying in western Oklahoma are Fort Supply Public Hunting Area, north of Woodward; Black Kettle National Grasslands, near Cheyenne; and the Canton Public Hunting Area, north of Canton.

"jake," a young male hatched the previous spring and not yet a year old.

I yawked again. *Gooble-ooble-oble. Gooble-ooble-oble.*

Boy howdy, that bird was getting close.

Bang. I thought a firecracker had gone off.

Jumping from my hiding place, I ran out just in time to see Tom pouncing on a young gobbler flopping on the short buffalo grass.



Dwain Bland, who organizes both spring and winter hunts, offers the following advice: "For hunting and fishing activities, the number-one concern is that the person knows and studies the regulations.... Also, the game department issues weekly reports on hunting and fishing conditions at all the large impoundments, and the newspapers of all major cities print these. I would also suggest that people call their local game ranger, who can be extremely helpful in giving directions, advising 'best' areas etc."

Names and phone numbers of game rangers throughout the state are listed at the back of the Department of Wildlife's regulations booklet.

"Yaaa-hooooo." I let out a war whoop that should've been heard out on Canton Lake. Grabbing my grandson, I danced a jig. Tom's face was lit up like a school teacher's on Friday afternoon.

Walking back toward the truck, I carried the little .410, while Steven wrestled the turkey. Tom wanted to carry the bird, but Steven wasn't having any of that.

Breaking open the gun's action, I fished out the spent hull. Reminded me of when I was a boy, growing up with a double-barreled .410 in hand. Course, there wasn't any turkey season back then, or any such place as the Canton Public Hunting Area.

Bringing the wild turkey back to huntable numbers across Oklahoma—indeed, across the United States—has to be the wildlife success story of the century.

Dwain Bland demonstrates turkey call notes with a "shufflin'" box—in this case a Latham box, named after the late Roger Latham, a nationally known conservationist from Pennsylvania. Photo by Lisa Bland Selix.

As late as the 1800s, western Oklahoma had tremendous flocks of wild turkeys. In 1882 turkeys collecting near the mouth of Chief Eagle Creek in what's now Major County covered nearly 40 acres so thick that one observer wrote that every turkey on earth was in that bunch. Gen. Phil Sheridan's troopers, quartered at Camp Supply in 1868, found turkey hunting particularly exciting. One old scout testified, "I've a bin fittin' Injuns an' other critters all my life, an' I never seed sich a time. I was a shootin of turkies one minit an' a dodgin bullets the other minit, an' yet no blood was spilt. All I got ter say, it was lucky for the men ef it wasn't fer the turkies."

Wild turkeys were a mainstay of the camp's menu, for on Thanksgiving Day in 1868, entrees included turkey soup, roast turkey, broiled turkey and turkey giblets—with champagne, ale and "pinetop whiskey" to wash it all down.

The enlisted men weren't the only soldiers who liked to hunt turkeys; General Sheridan got in his licks, too. He hunted them for sport, often accompanied by an escort of U.S. 4th Cavalry, six-mule supply wagons and cronies like Gen. William F. Strong and Gen. George Crook. Fact is, he liked to hunt the big cottonwood timbers that lay between Camp Supply and the old Indian Cantonment, which now stands on the west side of Canton Lake, so well that those woods became known as Sheridan's Roost.

At Fort Cobb in 1868 wild turkey could be purchased from an Indian for a pound of flour. By 1900, a bird would bring \$5 on the Chicago market.

OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPH

Governor George Nigh

Governor George Nigh holds the distinction of being the first governor in Oklahoma history to be elected to consecutive terms. He was re-elected November 2, 1982, as the 22nd Governor of the State of Oklahoma, becoming the first person in state history to win a majority of votes in all 77 counties. He is the first Lieutenant Governor to be elected Governor and the first person to serve more than once, having filled two unexpired terms prior to his election in 1978 as Governor of the State of Oklahoma.

Nigh began his political career in 1950 as the youngest member elected to the Oklahoma House of Representatives, serving four terms representing Pittsburg County.

In 1958, at age 31, he was elected the youngest Lieutenant Governor in the history of Oklahoma. In 1963, Nigh became the 17th Governor of Oklahoma, filling an unexpired term following the resignation of Governor J. Howard Edmondson. Elected Lieutenant Governor on three additional occasions, Nigh served from 1967-1971, 1971-1975 and 1975-1979.

On January 3, 1979, Nigh became the 22nd Governor of Oklahoma, serving five days to fill an unexpired term following the resignation of Governor David Boren. In doing so, he became the first Governor in Oklahoma history inaugurated outside of the capital city, being sworn in at ceremonies in Tulsa.

On January 8, 1979, he officially began his first full four-year term at inauguration ceremonies held in Oklahoma City.

By statute, Nigh is Chairman and Ex-Officio member of various state agencies, boards and commissions. He has served on the Executive Committee of the National Governors' Association and now chairs the subcommittee on oil and gas. He is a member of the Southern Governors' Association and is Chairman-Elect of the Southern Growth Policies Board, a 13-state policy making organization for the south. Nigh is a member of the Southern States Energy Board, served as Vice-President of the Council of State Governments, a national legislative and research organization, and is past chairman of the National Conference of Lieutenant Governors.

Nigh was born in McAlester on June 9, 1927. After graduating from McAlester High School in 1945, he served a tour of duty with the United States Navy, then graduated from Eastern A & M Junior College at Wilburton. In 1950, he earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from East Central State Teachers College in Ada.

He taught history and government at McAlester High School, was a partner in a McAlester grocery and has owned a public relations firm in Oklahoma City.

Nigh and his wife, Donna, have two children, Mike (born October 8, 1952) and Georgeann (born January 14, 1965). They are active members of the Council Road Baptist Church in Oklahoma City.

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OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPH

Lieutenant Governor Spencer Bernard

Spencer Bernard was born on his mother's Indian allotment on February 5, 1915, near Rush Springs, Oklahoma. The Lieutenant Governor is part Choctaw and Chickasaw. He and his wife, the former Vivian Dorman, put down their roots in Rush Springs and raised one daughter, Kay Ann.

He spent 18 years serving the State of Oklahoma as a member of the House of Representatives. During that time, he received the Outstanding Legislator for Conservation Award and held the office of Speaker Pro Tempore, the number two position in that legislative body, for an unprecedented third term.

Spencer Bernard has a wide range of experience as a farmer-rancher and as a businessman, which includes being President of Bernard Enterprises, a farm related business, and being a partner in the Jones-Bernard Insurance Agency. He still maintains the operation of his ranch and enjoys working it on weekends. Since the operation of state government is much like that of big business, these activities more than qualify him for the office of Lieutenant Governor.

His community pride and strong Oklahoma involvement are exemplified by his membership on the Board of Directors of the First National Bank of Rush Springs, the Mid-Continent Co-op in Yukon and the Union Mutual Insurance Company.

The Lieutenant Governor is active in a number of civic organizations, including the Rush Springs Lions Club, the Chamber of Commerce, the Farmers Union, Farm Bureau, Cattlemen's Association and the Democratic Party. He is also a member of the Church of Christ.

Spencer Bernard was elected Lieutenant Governor of Oklahoma on November 7, 1978 and again for a second term on November 2, 1982. By statute the Lieutenant Governor serves as President of the Senate and as a member of eight boards and commissions. In addition, he also serves as Co-Chairman of the Governor's Food and Agriculture Advisory Committee and Coordinator for State Disaster Relief.

The Lieutenant Governor, through his extensive travels, has become very knowledgeable about foreign trade and resources available throughout the world. As a result, Governor Nigh appointed Bernard State Coordinator for Oklahoma Exports. The National Council selected him to serve as a member on the National Board of the USA/ROC Foreign Trade Council.

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*Steven Preston, with trophy.
Bringing the wild turkey back to
hunnable numbers across
Oklahoma has to be the wildlife
success story of the century.
Photo by Dwain Bland.*



Market hunting, not to mention poaching, took its toll, and by 1925 the wild turkey was all but extinct in Oklahoma. The bird that Washington Irving, and George Armstrong Custer, had numbered among the thousands was gone.

Early efforts to restore the turkey involved restocking with pen-reared game-farm birds. These failed because the birds didn't have enough wild blood to survive on their own. Many, accustomed to mankind's bounty, appeared in farmyards asking for hand-outs, and coyotes and bobcats finished off what was left.

By 1947, when Oklahoma's game department released wild turkeys in western Oklahoma, much had been learned. The birds needed to come from wild stock, live-trapped and released as soon as possible. Oklahoma got its supply from Texas.

Successful? Just ask any turkey hunter. Subsequent trap-and-release programs have resulted in the entire state being stocked with wild turkeys. The observant traveler can see wild turkeys grazing anywhere in Oklahoma. Two years ago, I had to stop the pickup on the Indian Nations Turnpike to keep from running over a young gobbler.

Legal turkey hunting returned to Oklahoma going on 25 years ago, at first in only a few counties. As the flocks grew and spread, other areas were opened, and today turkey hunting is a widely accepted gunning pastime in more than 60 counties.

Hunting has always been a traditional fall and wintertime sport. Turkey hunting has changed that, for springtime turkeyin' is looked forward

to by thousands of western Okies. Wildlife studies have proven that "surplus" gobblers may be taken once they have bred the hens, for the crop of young that will hatch in late May or early June, together with the gobblers that evade hunters' guns, can easily carry on the race. Springtime seasons are often referred to by turkey hunters as "gobbling seasons," for the gobblers sound off lustily at this time.

Western Oklahoma's fall turkey season ends the weekend before Thanksgiving, allowing countless hunting families to enjoy wild turkey for the holiday bird. A dressed wild turkey compares to a store-bought domestic turkey about like a racehorse does to one of the Budweiser Clydesdales. Lean and trim, the wild gobbler is built for speed. Domestic turkeys have long been bred for heaviness of breast and snow-white meat. To many of us, the wild turkey has a far finer flavor, which could be attributed to its varied diet of seeds, berries and all sorts of insects and grass seeds, along with nuts, acorns and cultivated cereal grains.

April is the month of the spring hunt. Studies have shown that breeding has taken place by then, and gobblers can be taken with no harm to the future population. During a spring hunt, the hunter imitates the notes of the hen. If he has taken all proper precautions in making the notes, in choosing a place to call from and no end of other details, the notes will bring the gobbler to him. Anticipation gets knee deep as the hunter, dressed head to toe in camouflage, crouches in wait for an approaching feathered

dandy that's gobbling "till it jars the ground." Mosquitoes dig in, while buffalo gnats burn the skin like tiny branding irons. Sweat, colored green by camouflage paint, swells into a tickling drop under the hunter's nose. It's way too late to worry about whether he loaded the gun.

Waiting while Tom and Steven loaded hunting paraphernalia, guns, turkey and what-have-you into the back of the pickup, I gazed downriver toward Sheridan's Roost and thought a little about the general.

He was a hunter like Tom, Steven and me. He liked to hunt turkeys. What do you reckon he'd have thought about places for folks to hunt, brought about by the organized efforts of such things as wildlife federations, state game departments and the dedication of wildlife biologists, game wardens and countless others?

Of course, we won't ever know. Many are the times when I've thought his ghost was looking over things thereabouts, though, for I swear I've heard the creaking of wagon wheels. Or could it have been a couple of big elms rubbing together?

One thing's for certain. The turkeys he loved to hunt have come back.

There's nothing ghostly about that gobbling. OT

Tri-State:



Below. Sakiko Suetoki of the Sakae High School concert band from Saitama, Japan, visited Tri-State, Oklahoma and Disneyland last year. Photo by Susan Pfannmuller.

For four days every May, music is the force that binds the people of Enid. It's in the air, in people's voices, on their lips, in their fingers and tapping toes, in their hearts.

Those four days mark the city's world-famous Tri-State Music Festival, when as many as 20,000 young musicians and their mentors travel to Enid for a marathon encounter with music and with other people who make it.

Conjure up this image: Bands in bright braid swell through the streets, brass blazes, flutes trill. That's the "Multi-Million Dollar Parade" on Saturday, and it's what most people think of when they think of Tri-State—a convocation of marching bands that makes Professor Harold Hill's 76 trombones sound pretty thin.

But the parade is only part of what makes Tri-State special. First of all, there's the dedication of Enid residents, who volunteer to do everything from answering the phones, acting as chaperones and making sure that contestants at events are lined up and ready to go to opening their homes to two or three or four kids from out of town. Then there's the support of Phillips University, which with the citizens of Enid sponsors Tri-State. Phillips' computers make scheduling, judging and awarding prizes much

simpler, and music faculty members join musicians from all over to judge competitions, teach clinics and give special performances. Personnel from Vance Air Force Base help out, too.

"It takes hundreds of people to staff all the festival events," says Dr. Margaret Buvinger, Tri-State's managing director. "Without the services Enid residents volunteer, the festival could not be." Dr. Buvinger, who herself plays the french horn, has been involved in the Tri-State tradition for 25 years. She's also president of the festival board of directors, as well as president of the Enid School Board.

When a score or so thousand musicians, from grade school to high school age, show up, just getting them housed and fed is quite a task. About 300 stay with Enid residents; many more sleep on the 3,500 cots owned by the festival that are set up in lodge halls, churches and schools all over town. Others stay nearby in Hennessey, Fairview and Stillwater, and some of the largest bands commute from Oklahoma City.

Wherever they stay, they must be fed. Restaurants and fast-food operations stock up on hamburger for the onslaught, and many civic and church groups set up concession stands to sell sandwiches and soft drinks. "This is one of the things that Tri-State does for Enid," Dr. Buvinger says. "A lot

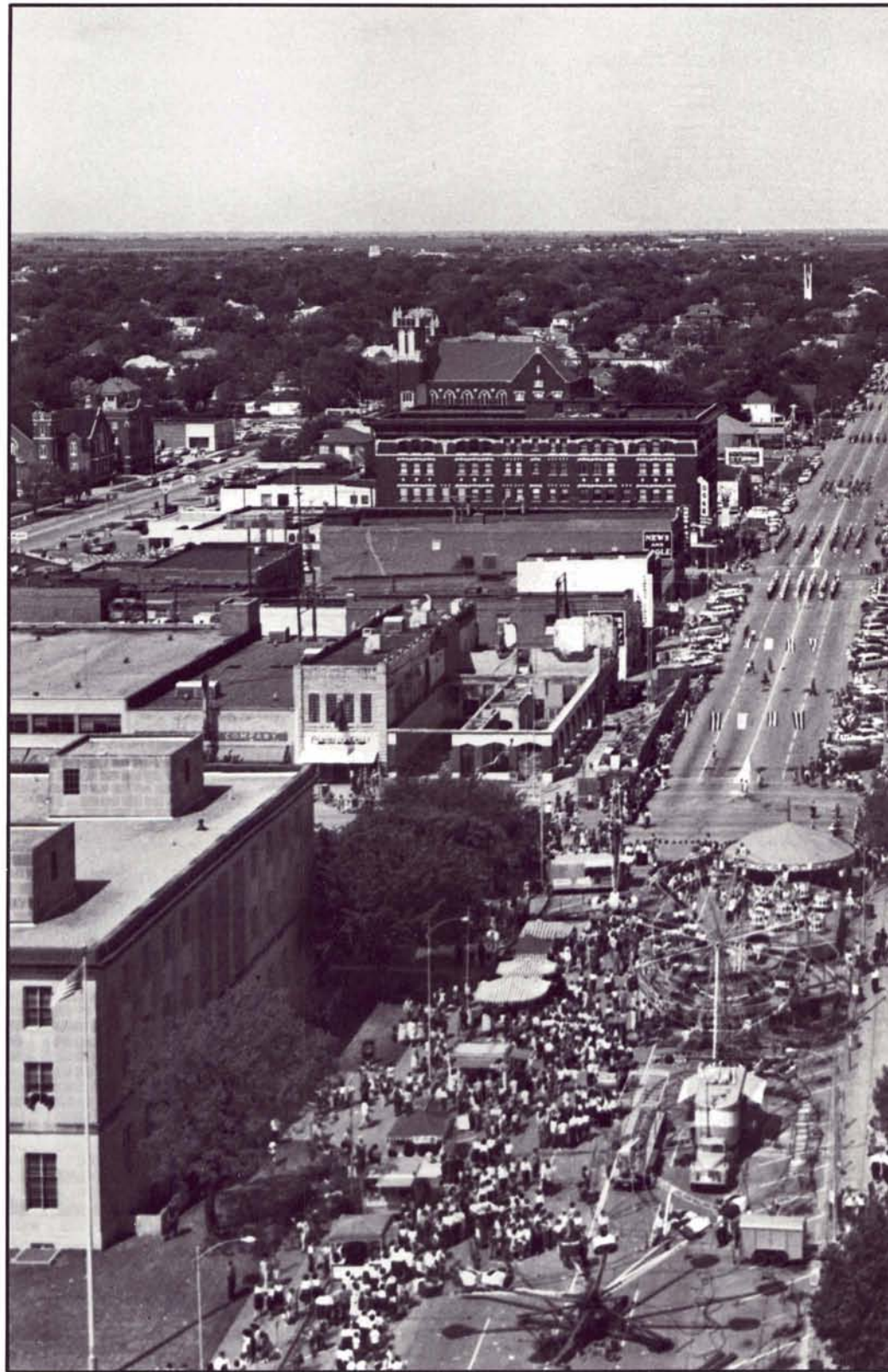


Oklahoma's Musical Mayfest

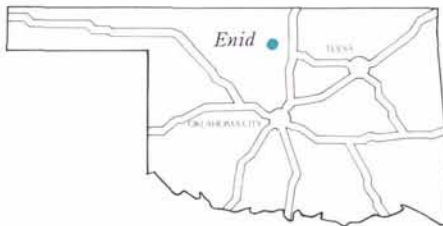


Above. Andrea Pierce of Enid's Waller Junior High does last-minute warm-ups before the flute competition. Photo by Susan Pfannmuller.

Right. The Multi-Million Dollar Parade. Photo by Paul E. Lefebvre.



Left. Tahlequah High drum major Elizabeth Purdy, left, checks Ann Boatright's flugelhorn for smudges before the final competition. Photo by Susan Pfannmuller.



Getting There

The adjective Tri-State doesn't begin to describe the scope of Enid's music festival. This year 10,000 invitations went out to bands and directors in 10 states.

All four days, May 4-7, are packed with activities: Some 7,500 different solo and ensemble competitions take place in church basements, social halls, auditoriums and classrooms all over town. A visitor's best bet is to check in at festival headquarters, located in Enid's convention center, at 125 W. Cherokee, right behind the town square. Souvenir programs are on sale that tell what is happening when and where.

Below is a list of the festival's major events. All events for which no admission prices are listed are free of charge.

Wednesday, May 4

All day — Competition for elementary school soloists, ensembles, bands and orchestras.

6:30 p.m. — Marching band contest for the smaller junior high and high schools. Enid High School stadium, just off SH 81 South. Admission: \$1 for adults; children under 12 and festival participants not in the contest, 25 cents.

Thursday, May 5

All day — Competition for high school soloists and ensembles; competition

for junior high school choirs, bands and orchestras.

7:30 p.m. — Jazz Program, featuring an honor stage band and show choir chosen from among festival participants. Guest group: The Notables, from Offutt Air Force Base, near Omaha. General admission, \$2; student participants, \$1.

Friday, May 6

All day — competition for high school bands, choirs and orchestras; competition for junior high school soloists and ensembles.

6:30 p.m. — Marching contest for the larger high school bands. Enid High School stadium. Admission: \$3 for adults; students, \$1; children under 12 and festival participants not taking part in the contest, 50 cents.

Saturday, May 7

9:30 a.m. — The Multi-Million Dollar Parade. Begins at the west end of Enid's downtown square. It takes about three hours for the approximately 150 marching units to pass by.

Early afternoon — Youth symphony contests.

3 p.m. — The Grand Concert, featuring a 200-piece band, a 200-voice choir and a 100-piece symphony. Student performers for these honor groups are chosen from among festival participants. Convention Hall, 125 W. Cherokee. General admission, \$2; reserved seats, \$3.50.

of organizations in town raise money for their projects during the festival." And feed the multitudes at the same time.

What draws all the orchestras and bands and choruses and individual musicians to Enid every May is a series of clinics, competitions and performances, the chance to show off what they know and the hard work they've put in, and to become better at what they do. The range amazes: marching, twirling and drill-team work; madrigal singing and handbell ringing; brass and woodwind ensembles; individual competition on everything from bassoons to xylophones.

Dr. Milburn Carey, Enid's "Music Man," who was Tri-State's managing director for 47 of its 50 years until his retirement after the 50th anniversary last year, puts it this way: "We call it a major music education event." He adds, "None of the other school band competitions shows the interest we do in the individual student. We emphasize the talented individual."

For four days, those talented individuals are everywhere you look, it seems. Whether they're part of a 150-piece marching band or play a solo piccolo, the kids are immersed in music. A walk through the halls of the big downtown churches during competitions might have the feel of a stroll past a musical advent calendar. Behind every door young people are competing and learning, full volume.

There's no doubt the festival turns Enid topsy-turvy. For four days the festival is the town. Students are all over the place, polishing their marching shoes, practicing their competition piece one last time, listening to a guest performer, waiting with fluttering stomachs for their turn to perform, catching a nap on a cot in the middle of chaos, grabbing a quick sandwich with a new friend who may live hundreds of miles from them.

Over the whole city is the buzz of voices, teaching, asking questions, giggling and gossiping, talking about technique and talent and where to go to get something to eat. And over it all is what they came for: the sound of music. OT

One Tahlequah High band member manages to nap amidst chaos. Photo by Susan Pfannmuller.



Golf Amid the Animal Kingdom At Boiling Springs



Larry D. Brown

By Louise Boyd James

Louise James, who lives just down the road from Boiling Springs Golf Course, is the curator of Woodward's Plains Indians and Pioneers Historical Society Foundation and Art Museum.

Golf courses, like fine wine, must age to perfection. For a course, the process takes seven or eight years, the time it takes for the grass to become fully established. Boiling Springs Golf Course, three and a half miles northeast of Woodward, is now aging. Apparently, 1978 was a vintage year.

The mellowing process has not been without its problems: sand and snakes in the sprinkler system, earthworm hordes on the greens and one that

may be unique to Boiling Springs—a buffalo bull on the fairways.

But then Boiling Springs is unique in many ways. It is the only 18-hole golf course within 90 miles of Woodward. It is a municipally owned facility, open to the public. And, since it is set in a heavily wooded area, each fairway is a nature retreat as well.

The golf course lies just west of Boiling Springs State Park, a heavily timbered area, and the trees spill over onto the new golf course. Del Scoville,

Getting There

In addition to a chance to play challenging golf in a back-to-nature setting, Boiling Springs Golf Course, one mile north of Woodward on SH 34, then five miles east on SH 34C, offers the amenities most golfers expect from a course: a pro shop, golf carts and a clubhouse. Hours are "from daylight till dark, weather permitting," according to course pro Del Scoville. Cart rental is \$12 for 18 holes; greens fees are \$6 weekdays and \$10 weekends and holidays. The course's phone number is (405) 256-1206.

If you're coming to the area to play



the course and you'd like to stay as well as play in a wooded setting, Boiling Springs State Park which adjoins the course to the east, has cabins and hookups for campers and RVs — not to mention picnic shelters, playgrounds, hiking trails and a swimming pool. Call 800/522-8565 for cabin reservations.

who runs the pro shop, says, "It's the only golf course in Oklahoma where you have to wait until turkey, deer, pheasant or quail move."

Plans for turning the tree-covered sandhills adjoining Boiling Springs State Park into a tournament-quality golf course began in the fall of 1976 with a group of Woodward golfers. LaVern Phillips, a local real-estate developer, was named coordinator of the project. The golf course was to be built on 135 acres of land owned by the City of Woodward but leased to the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department.

The department returned the land to Woodward in early 1977, and the way was cleared for a test of the local backing for the project. Phillips sought a federal grant-in-aid, which the local community had to match. Since the money funded for the project eventually totaled more than a half-million dollars, Phillips had his task cut out for him. Residents came forward with money, labor, heavy equipment and fuel to make up the local share.

From the start, there were those who said the project would never work, says Jack Walstad, president of the Boiling Springs Golf Association. By the fall of 1977 clearing began following a plan developed by Donald Sechrest of Broken Arrow, who did the original fairway and course design. During the winter of 1977-78 the clearing continued, as trees fell

to make room for golfers. Phillips recalls, "A semi came from Perryton, Texas, for a load of firewood; they don't have a chance at much wood out there."

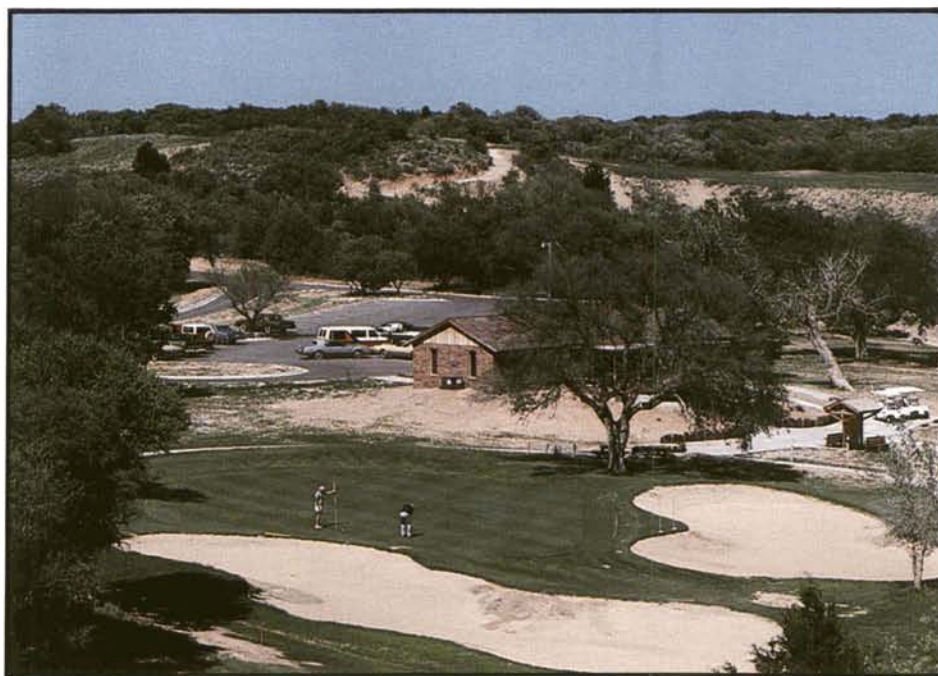
Phillips often walked in front of the bulldozers interpreting the flags for the course. He laughs about one foggy day when he laid out the hole running the wrong direction. He says, "Sechrest bought me a compass, so I could tell where north is!"

Installation of the underground water system began during the summer of 1978. "It was the hottest summer ever," Phillips remembers. "It was horrible on the bare sand."

That fall Lou Capelli, a greens sculptor from New Jersey, arrived to plant the greens personally. The grass he used, Bent Creeping Pencilgrass, has

the reputation of being the best grass in the world for golf-course greens. Phillips also recalls that it was "so expensive it's scary."

The summer of 1979 was devoted to sprigging the fairways with U-3 Bermuda. And for those central Oklahomans who have wondered what became of the old polo field in Norman, the grass is growing green at Boiling Springs Golf Course. Once the grass was purchased for the course, the next problem was getting it to Woodward. Enter Tom Merklin, who hauled it by the wheat truck full from Norman, a round trip of more than 150 miles. "Tom hauled 22 loads of roots," says Phillips, laughing. "He would go down and haul them back of an evening. They had to be planted quickly the next day, and then another



A deer's eye view of the green country surrounding the fairways and clubhouse of Boiling Springs Golf Course. Photo by Fred W. Marvel.



Just to the east of the golf course is another oasis, Boiling Springs State Park. Photo by Fred W. Marvel.

load would be brought out."

The summer of '79 was the "bringing in" period for the golf course, as the polo-field Bermuda took root and matured. The fairways and greens were kept growing with water from the Woodward sewer plant picked up from the North Canadian River. The water was pumped to holding ponds, then distributed through the sprinkler system to the course. At least that was the plan.

In reality, says greens superintendent Bart Frie, the system never worked quite right. Sand, snakes and minnows continually caused problems with the fully automatic system. Plans are now under way to install a freshwater line that will bring a million gallons a day from Woodward to the golf course, creature-free.

Frie believes his job will be much easier when the new system is completed this spring. Water is vital to any golf course, and one built on sand in western Oklahoma has special problems. Phillips cites one: "You can lose a green in a matter of hours in the summer. If the air is still, and it's very hot, the grass turns blue, and you must hose it down to cool it."

Anyone who struggles to keep a

lawn lush and green all summer can appreciate Frie's task of supervising 18 lawns and fairways. If the watering system is working, other problems can crop up, including an earthworm convention, as the worms are drawn to the green's moister soil. Crows can sense the situation, and they tear the green apart getting the worms. Phillips says, "It looks just like somebody stuck spikes into the green."

Deer and turkey abound in the area, but perhaps the chemicals used on the greens keep them from eating the grass. Mainly they pose gracefully for visitors, then cross to better grazing elsewhere. During this past summer a vagrant buffalo bull frequented the golf course, providing a little diversion for golfers bored with the deer.

There's not much chance golfers will become bored with the play at Boiling Springs, which officially opened on Sept. 24, 1981. Golf pro Scoville, when asked the toughest hole, says without hesitation, "All 18. You just can't let up on any of them." He will advise that Number 17 is the most scenic, and that if you're seeking an overview of the area, that's the spot to shoot from. Hole Number 1 has the highest professional rating,

he finally says. The golf course is short in yardage, and tight. If a ball lands in the rough, it's gone! While the course is obviously too tough for the beginning golfer, it's a real test for an experienced player.

Because it is such challenging play, Boiling Springs is a tournament-quality facility. While Woodward probably could never accommodate a major United States tournament, state and regional ones certainly would find the course rewarding. Efforts are under way to attract just such a match.

But it is difficult to convince people that northwest Oklahoma actually has a quality golf course. Then, when something is said about it being set in a tree-covered oasis, the story becomes impossible to believe. After all, everyone knows western Oklahoma does not have trees!

A steadily growing number of golfers have played Boiling Springs Golf Course, and seen those trees first-hand. They have come from across the United States and several foreign countries. A man from Saudi Arabia has even played the sandhill course. Word is spreading about the youthful golf course in the woodland setting. The stories of waiting for a shot until the deer—or a vagrant buffalo—cross the fairway are being repeated. Increasingly golfers arrive to meet the challenges of top-flight golf in an oasis called Boiling Springs. OT



Fred W. Marvel

Of Mules and Men... and the Red Carpet Mule Train

Why would anyone who knows about the finer things in life want to ride in a slow, rough-riding farm wagon pulled by a couple of cantankerous old mules?

When a fella knows that all a car needs is a key in the switch and gas in the tank, why would he get up at sunrise to shoulder a bale of hay to the mules, clean and polish miles of harness leather, pull and stretch heavy canvas wagon tops across wooden bows, push and strain to hitch up the team after spending the night out in the open?

Why would anyone want to do that?

Maybe it is because people have a nostalgic feeling for things past and sometimes take comfort in recapturing "old times," or maybe it is because there is a little bit of pioneer in us all.

A bunch of western Oklahoma "muleskinners" say they guess it's a love for nature and the outdoors that



Mule train members take their wagons and teams to celebrations throughout a wide area, like this one, the Cheyenne-Arapaho Old Settlers Reunion, which was held in Cheyenne last April. Photo by Fred W. Marvel.

By Carolyn Leonard

Carolyn Leonard, who lives in Buffalo, is a correspondent for the Daily Oklahoman and the Oklahoma City Times and has written for Seventeen and The Western Horseman, among others.

Drivers and riders say that the world just looks and sounds better when you're sitting in a wagon behind a team of mules.

Whole families share the pleasures the mule train brings.

Photo by Carolyn Leonard.



inspires them to do it. Of course, most of them also admit they grew up on farms and had worked with mules before.

Whatever the reason, and whatever their backgrounds, all sorts of people seem to want to go for a ride in one of the colorful green wagons with orange wheels and canvas-covered tops that make up the Red Carpet Mule Train.

They can be seen at most special events and parades in—and sometimes out of—Oklahoma.

One member put it this way: “We will try to go to any parade where we are invited and most definitely will be there if travel funds are provided!”

Club members live scattered all over the western half of the state and even in the Texas panhandle.

Wagonmaster Ivan Shuman of Laverne and his sidekick, C. W. “Spec” Lester of Cheyenne, both in their mid-70s, are the senior members of the bunch, but participation isn’t limited to old-timers. At any gathering of the group are all ages, right down to the youngest member, yearling Ben Russell Barby of Laverne. Club pres-

ident is Harold Poage of Woodward.

Of the 50 to 60 dues-paying members, an average of 40 attend monthly pot-luck dinner meetings, and around 11 wagons and teams appear to represent the group at special events. Every gathering includes a chance to eat together—“That’s why we show up,” members say, only half in jest. Those who own neither mules nor wagons are called “knife and fork” members, and there are several of those.

To people who are unfamiliar with mules, members are always willing to talk about the much maligned animals. The mule is a hybrid cross between a mare and a donkey jack, they’ll tell them. The hinny is a reverse hybrid cross between a donkey jennet and a stallion. Both mules and hinnies are sterile and cannot reproduce. Mules come in many sizes, from mini-mules to draft mules.

Assistant wagonmaster Lester claims that these hybrids are exceedingly intelligent and versatile animals. In fact, ask any Red Carpet muleskinner why he works mules instead of horses and you will probably hear some of the following:

“A mule won’t overeat and founder or make himself sick like horses do.”

“Takes less feed to keep them going.”

“They are stronger, walk faster and have more stamina than horses.”

“Mules just got a bad reputation; they are really smarter than horses.”

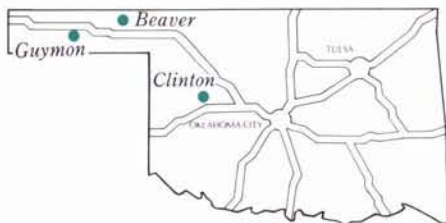
“They won’t run through a fence and hurt themselves.”

“If a mule gets tangled up in wire he’ll just stand and wait for help, where a horse usually panics and gets all cut up.”

Of course, wagonmaster Shuman admits that now and then you get a mean mule and the only way to train him is with a big 2 x 4 board.

Most people think the wagon train idea started and ended with the Bicentennial trip cross-country to Valley Forge, Pa., in 1976. Ivan Shuman, his wife, Dorothy, and Spec Lester did make the trip, driving the official Oklahoma wagon with Shuman’s mules, but the Red Carpet Mule Train was already five years old then.

“The way it started was back in 1971,” Shuman explains. “Mules were hard to find then.” About five or six “mule men” got together and decided



Getting There

The men, women and mules of the Red Carpet Mule Train will be on the road to several Oklahoma celebrations this spring: the Cheyenne-Arapaho Old Settlers Reunion, which takes place in Clinton on April 16; Beaver's Cimarron Territory Celebration parade, April 23; and Guymon's Pioneer Days the first weekend in May. Plans are in the works for other appearances, from Laverne's Independence Day festivities right on through the Christmas Parade at Shattuck. For more information on the mule train, write the group's president, Harold Poage, at 1207 Webster, Woodward, OK 73801.



Above. Three generations of mule fanciers: Sherry Barby, left, her two-year-old daughter, Sara Rose, and Sherry's mother, Ollie Dotson. Left. C. W. "Spec" Lester. Below. Ivan Shuman. Shuman, his wife, Dorothy, and Spec Lester made a Bicentennial trek all the way to Valley Forge by mule train. Photos by Carolyn Leonard.



to organize a mule train support group. Shuman was first to pay his dues, and Lester wasn't far behind.

Then they started looking for a team of mules.

"I had some Quarterhorse mares," Shuman says as he climbs up over the front of the wagon and into the green wooden bed. "I bought a mammoth jack from a fellow up in Kansas and started raising my own mules."

Shuman sticks a scuffed tan boot up on the buckboard and settles back on the hard wooden bench seat, grasps both reins in a leathery hand, says, "Geddap there, mules," and we're off.

"I've got my own mule factory now," Shuman chuckles. He grasps the front brim of his western hat, lifts it and scratches the un-tanned part of his face.

Shuman and his mules are quite a team. He figures they have traveled thousands of miles together, and the trio seems to have the understanding of old friends—knowing what the other requires without being told.

"I'm the only one who has ever worked with these two old mules," Shuman says. "I raised and trained them myself when we were both younger."

The mules, 11-year-old half-brothers, are dark and well matched. Shuman uses the hand that holds the reins to motion at them. "The one on the left there, that reddish one, is named Doc, and Festus there is what they call a blue mule."

The wagoner's team is fitted out in black leather harness trimmed with white bone circles and silver studs; on each hip is a shiny heart the size of a silver dollar. The wooden horse-shoe-shaped hames are painted a bright red, and each side is topped with a big brass knob. Six red tassels sway gracefully in the Oklahoma breeze.

The steel-banded, narrow wooden wheels of the "butcher knife" wagon rumble on the pavement and the ride shakes your innards, but it's fun, all the same. Traveling along at this speed you can see and hear the birds and even smell the wildflowers.

The ride's a way back to a world most of us rush past without ever seeing. And all at once you *know* why these people forsake their modern conveniences to rough it with a wagon and a team of mules.

OT

1 Traces of the fabled Chisholm Trail run east of town, and Kingfisher's Chisholm Trail Museum, at 605 Zellers, is full of history from Oklahoma's Indian and cowboy days. Artifacts include an impressive arrowhead collection, Chief Hunting Horse's game bag and a vest owned by Sitting Bull. The staff can also direct visitors to Jesse Chisholm's grave, near Geary.

Nearby stands the Seay Mansion, the restored home of Oklahoma Territory's second governor. Both mansion and museum are open Monday-Saturday 9-5 and Sunday 1-5. (405) 375-5176.

2 Watonga's T. B. Ferguson Home, at 519 N. Weigel, shows off memorabilia of Thomas Benton Ferguson, pioneer newspaperman and Oklahoma's sixth territorial governor. Both Ferguson and his wife were nationally known writers; Edna Ferber began *Cimarron* while she was staying with them. Hours are Monday-Saturday 9-5 and Sunday 1-5. (405) 623-5069.

North of Watonga off SH 51A is Oklahoma's northwesternmost resort, Roman Nose. Located at a spot that was once a retreat of the Cheyenne tribe, the park features a lodge and cottages, a nine-hole golf course, a natural rock swimming pool, a lake—all surrounded by bluffs of white gypsum and red shale. (405) 623-7281.

3 Canton Reservoir, two miles north of Canton, is a haven for fishermen, and the adjoining Canton Public Hunting Area seems like heaven to hunters of deer, quail and turkey. The Corps of Engineers runs several campgrounds, including one called Sandy Cove, complete with a fine sandy swimming beach. Call (405) 886-2983 for more information on what the corps offers at the reservoir.

Every May, area businessmen get together and put on the Walleye Rodeo to celebrate the walleye fishing the lake's known for. The four-day event, which takes place May 19-22, offers prizes for everything from catching the biggest to catching the most—and cash awards for hooking tagged fish. Contact Bob McGahen at (405) 886-3262 for more information.



THE Great Northwest TOUR

Compiled by Kate Jones
Photographs by Fred W. Marvel

4 "They anticipated a land of milk and honey and found instead a land barely able to produce bread and water." So reads a display at Enid's Museum of the Cherokee Strip, which takes a look back at a time when Enid's prosperity wasn't as assured as it is today. Exhibits include rooms filled with pioneer items, from a children's room full of toys to a bedroom complete with ornate oak furniture, old quilts and a ticking clock to an old-timey kitchen with a Home Comfort stove. A large metal outbuilding holds a 1926 Model-T and an Aultman Taylor threshing machine the size of a woolly mammoth and other old-time implements. Hours are Tuesday-Friday 9-5 and Saturday and Sunday 2-5. (405) 237-1907.

5 Don't be put off by the modern building that greets you at the site of the Sod House Museum, on SH 8 between Aline and Cleo Springs. It's there to protect a genuine Oklahoma treasure, relic of the days when pioneers by the thousands lived in houses made of prairie sod. The two-room "soddy," which was built in 1894 just after the opening of the Cherokee Strip, has been restored by the Oklahoma Historical Society. It contains period furniture and such authentic touches as a ceiling covering, which performed the valuable function of keeping dirt, snakes and insects from raining down on the family.

The museum is open Tuesday-Friday 9-5 and Saturday and Sunday 2-5. (405) 463-2441.



Preceding page. *High-country hiking, Cimarron County style.*
Above. *Little Sahara offers acres of sand to dune buggy through.*

Below. *A carousel cowboy takes a ride at Guymon's No Man's Land Celebration.*



6 Alfalfa County's Great Salt Plains, along the Salt Fork of the Arkansas, is a paradise of a rare kind. The area is home to some of the best wildfowl hunting around, and also to Great Salt Plains Reservoir, Salt Plains National Wildlife Refuge and Great Salt Plains State Park (405/626-4731).

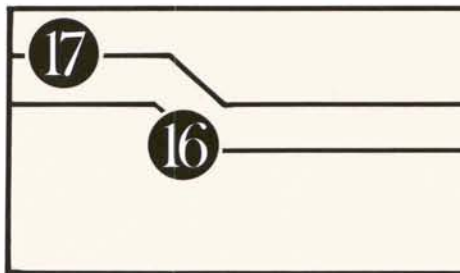
The park and the wildlife refuge offer boating, swimming, fishing and picnicking. The area is also home to the famous selenite crystals. On Saturdays, Sundays and holidays from April 1 to Oct. 15, 8-6, the U.S. Department of the Interior opens an area where folks can come in and dig for the beautiful crystal-and-brown-sugar gypsum formations.

7 "The Castle on the Hill," that turreted fortress that dominated the Alva landscape back when Northwestern Oklahoma State University was "Northwestern Territorial Normal School," may be gone. But memories of that building and all the other things that made up the pioneer life of the Alva area are alive at 901 14th St. in the Cherokee Strip Museum.

Exhibits include a dressing case used by conductors on the Santa Fe, bottles of Oak-a-Lax Tonic and Keeno-Tone Ointment, once concocted in Alva, and a barber shop complete with a tin tub. "That tub was used by cowboys on Saturday night," says Vera Strasbaugh, president of the Cherokee Strip Association, which runs the museum. "A bath cost 25 cents—and they had to pump their own water."

Regular hours for the museum are Saturday 2-4 and Sunday 2-5. (405) 327-2030.

8 Acres of sand dunes in Oklahoma? That's right—at Little Sahara Recreation Area south of Waynoka. The area is a mecca for dune buggiers—and drivers of everything from jeeps and four-wheel drive pickups to motorcycles and three-wheelers—and races are often held on major holidays. Near the dune buggy area are picnic shelters, electricity hookups, a playground and a group camp. Call (405) 824-1471 for more information.



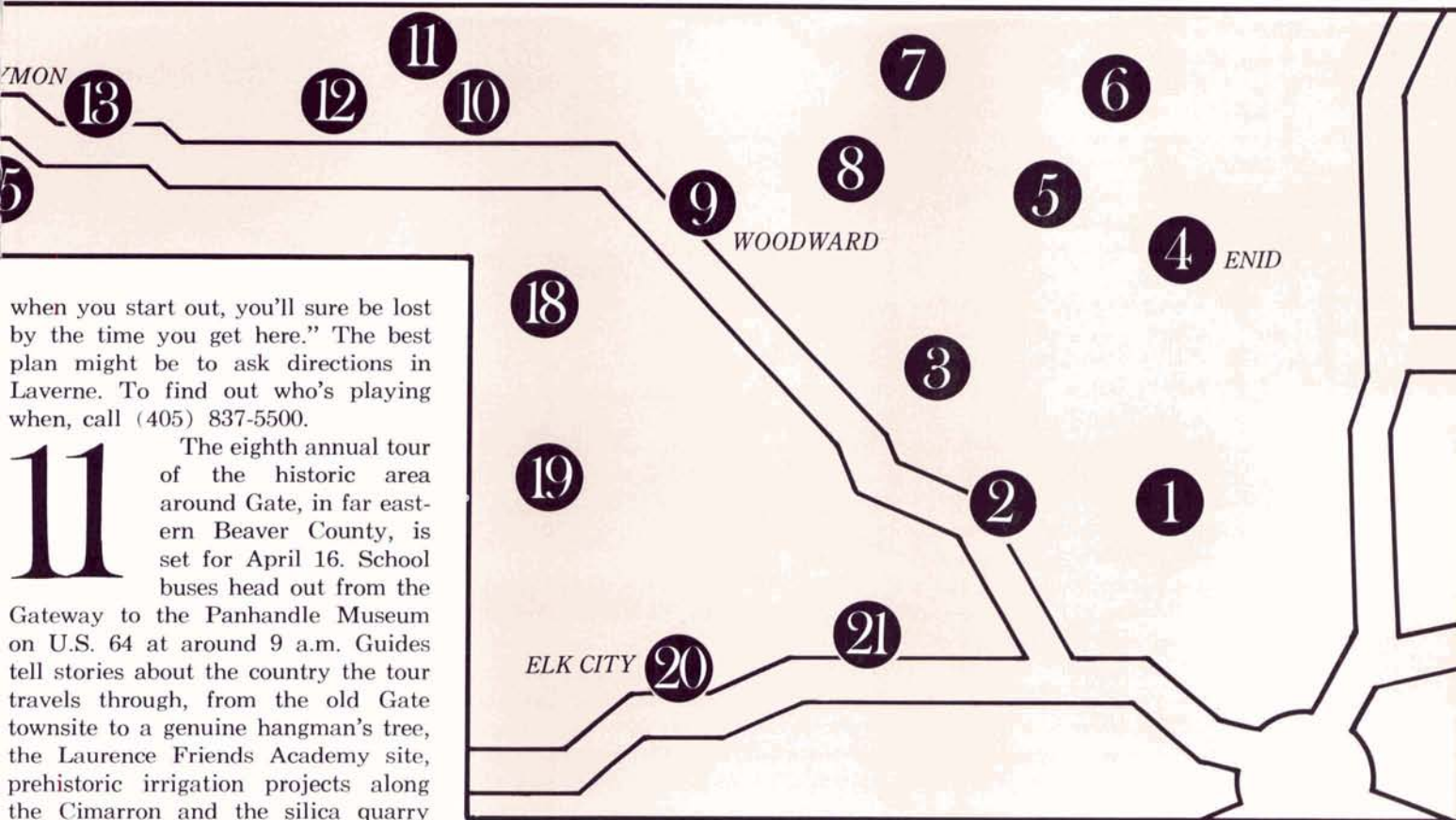
9 Woodward has survived the tenancies of characters that range from Temple Houston to "Miss Dolly" Kezer—and the great tornado of 1947—to emerge as one of the premier cities of Oklahoma's northwest. The Plains Indians and Pioneers Historical Foundation Museum and Art Center, at 2009 Williams Ave., shows off the history of Woodward and the land 50 miles to all sides of it.

Highlights are belongings of Sam Houston's famous son, including a carved walking cane and a Mexican sombrero, and the Fort Supply Room, which holds one of old Camp Supply's two fire stations. Another room is devoted to Miss Dolly Kezer, Woodward's infamous madam, who went legit in 1899, sold her jewels, sent home any of her girls who would go and homesteaded southwest of Woodward. She was killed in the tornado of '47. Museum hours: Tuesday-Saturday 10-5 and Sunday 1-4. (405) 256-6136.

10 If you've hankered for a real barn dance, here's your chance: Head for the Gig Bar Ranch, between Laverne and Slapout. The band starts playing every Friday and Saturday night at 9, but the crowd gathers early to swim in the Olympic-sized pool or dine on steaks in the cypress-paneled restaurant.

The night spot was started by rancher Bob Taft in 1980 to give his neighbors a place to go for a good time after the dance hall in May burned down. Mr. Taft died in 1981, but his family keeps up the tradition.

Directions to the ranch are classic country: Go to the Laverne stoplight, head west six miles, turn south for two miles, then back west for a mile and a half. The way's not particularly well marked, and manager Johnny Prophet maintains, "If you're not lost



when you start out, you'll sure be lost by the time you get here." The best plan might be to ask directions in Laverne. To find out who's playing when, call (405) 837-5500.

11 The eighth annual tour of the historic area around Gate, in far eastern Beaver County, is set for April 16. School buses head out from the Gateway to the Panhandle Museum on U.S. 64 at around 9 a.m. Guides tell stories about the country the tour travels through, from the old Gate townsite to a genuine hangman's tree, the Laurence Friends Academy site, prehistoric irrigation projects along the Cimarron and the silica quarry north of town, where a deposit of volcanic ash is mined to this day.

Contact Ernestine Maphet at Gate, OK 73844 for reservations; no street address is necessary, since she's also the postmistress. Hours for the museum, housed in the old Gate M-K-T depot, are 9-11:30 and 12:30-4:30 Monday-Friday and Saturday 1-5.

Twenty-some miles west of Gate another old depot has a new life, this time as the Forgan Depot Family Steakhouse. The restaurant combines

railroad collectibles with western classics like steaks, pan-fried chicken and turkey fries, and people have been known to fly in just for a sample. Hours are 5-11 p.m. Monday-Saturday.

12 Whether you call it the "Organic Olympics" or just a plain old "cow chip throw," Beaver's annual event is billed as the World's Champion-

ship. People come from as far away as

Denver and Kansas to compete in the throw and to see the rest of Beaver's annual Cimarron Territory Celebration.

The flinging commences on Saturday, April 23, but the celebration begins the Wednesday before, and features coin, antique and craft shows and a parade. Call the Beaver Chamber of Commerce, (405) 625-4726, for more information.

Beaver may be called the Cow Chip

The Forgan Depot Family Steakhouse serves up railroad history with its steaks and pan-fried chicken.



Capital today, but it once was the capital of the "Territory of Cimarron" during the Panhandle's bid for self-rule, and a new museum on the town's fairgrounds catalogs that history and a lot more besides. The Jones and Plummer Trail Museum, which opened last October, lists hours of 1-5 Wednesday-Sunday. (405) 625-4439.

13 Every May, on the month's first weekend, Guymon throws a shindig that's part old-timer's reunion and part celebration—No Man's Land Pioneer Days. The dates this year are May 6 and 7.

The weekend kicks off with a gathering of mule-train caravans at a camp outside of town, complete with barbecue and music. Saturday sees a parade, reunion, art show and rodeo. For more information, call the Guymon Chamber of Commerce at (405) 338-3376.

14 The town of Texhoma is not your average small town. First of all, it straddles the Oklahoma-Texas line. It's quite possible for a resident to park his car in Oklahoma and walk through his back door into Texas. Then there's the Okie Relays.

Every third Saturday in May, runners line up at 8 a.m. at Elkhart on the Oklahoma-Kansas state line for a relay race across the Panhandle to Texhoma, 40 miles along SH 95.

Texhoma foots a local team, and also offers a spaghetti dinner the night before the race. The date of the 1983 race, the 16th annual, is May 21. Anyone who completes the 10.1 miles receives a commemorative patch. Anyone who's interested in getting a four-person team together and running all the way across Oklahoma can call the Texhoma Chamber of Commerce at (405) 423-7341.

15 Unless you're willing to head into Texas, a trip to Texhoma involves a 20-mile round trip swing from Guymon. Going or coming, stop in Goodwell and visit the No Man's Land Historical Museum, on the campus of Panhandle State University.

The museum calls the Oklahoma Panhandle its collection area, but museum manager Barbara Kachel points



Treasure troves of selenite crystals lie beneath the Great Salt Plains, along the Salt Fork of the Arkansas River.

out that since the Panhandle is only 34.5 miles wide, the museum ends up gathering from a five-state area. Highlights include the William E. Baker collection of Indian artifacts and the Duckett alabaster carving collection. The Ducketts, Eunice, Russell and John, spent 35 years carving alabaster and Boise City sandstone into everything from brooches to urns, and when Eunice died last year the collection came to Goodwell. Hours are 9-5 Tuesday-Friday and 2-5 Saturday and Sunday. (405) 349-2670.

16 Some of Oklahoma's most fascinating secrets are hidden away at the end of the Panhandle in Cimarron County—dinosaur quarry, the Cimarron Cut-off of the Santa Fe Trail and its Autograph Cliff, not to mention mysterious Black Mesa itself. The only problem is that they really are hidden, often not easy to find and on private land.

Travelers can see these sights without annoying the landowners by going along on the next Santa Fe Trail Daze Tour. The tour, which is part of Boise City's Santa Fe Trail Daze celebration, will leave from the Christian Church on U.S. 287 North at 8 a.m. on June 3. Tour guides will let riders in on the secrets of the area, including Autograph Cliff and the famous dinosaur tracks.

The tour's not the whole of the Trail Daze. The celebration runs June 2-5

and features everything from bingo and a pancake breakfast to the World Championship Post Hole Digging Contest. The 14th Annual Little Hombre Rodeo finishes off the doings on Sunday. For more information, call the Boise City Chamber of Commerce at (405) 544-3344.

17 If you have a yen to camp under western skies in rugged mesa country, try out Black Mesa State Park, just off the highway between Boise City and Kenton. (Don't let the "Not on State Highway System" designation on the state map worry you. The road is perfectly good, though it does pass through some open range, and you need to watch out for cattle guards and occasional recalcitrant cattle. It's all part of the adventure.)

The park itself offers camping and good fishing for black bass, channel cat and yellow cat in Lake Carl Etling. There's also room to hike and even a small "forest" of petrified wood. For more information call (405) 426-2222.

18 Runners from across the state—and across our borders—have been known to spend the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend toiling at what some call the most grueling race they've ever run. It's the Gage Marathon, and it starts out at 6 a.m. on

Gage's Main Street, heads north of town on SH 46 for six hilly miles, then doubles back. Every mile is marked, and every two miles there's a water stop—welcome sights as the day warms up.

The race, which is also the state championship marathon, is in its 14th year. The winner gets a trophy. Everyone who makes it all the way gets to say, "I completed the Gage Marathon." For those who only want to be able to say, "I attended the Gage Marathon," local residents have organized a small fair.

For more information on the marathon, write Yvonne Hassler at P.O. Box 4, Gage, OK 73843.

19 When most of us were growing up, it was "The Battle of the Washita." Today it's just as likely to be called "The Black Kettle Massacre."

Whatever your feelings about the encounter and Gen. George Armstrong Custer, Cheyenne's Black Kettle Museum can help you better understand what took place in the early morning of Nov. 27, 1868 along the Washita. A diorama shows what Black Kettle's camp looked like when the 7th Cavalry struck. Other exhibits include Plains Indian items of the period 1860-1880, military artifacts, including a carbine used in the fight and relics retrieved from the battle site. Hours are 9-5 Monday-Saturday and Sunday 1-5. (405) 497-3929.

The battle site itself, complete with historical marker, lies two miles north and west of Cheyenne on SH 47A.



Elk City's Beutler Brothers Rodeo Hall can fill a young man's head with dreams.

20 The main building of Elk City's Old Town Museum Complex, at the corner of U.S. 66 and Pioneer Road, looks like a gingerbread-bedecked home of a Victorian gentleman. And in fact that's just what it was built to be in 1912. Today it is restored and filled with period furnishings—parlor, dining room-kitchen, bedrooms for a child and an adult. There are also such di-

Riders silhouetted against a blazing sky signal the end of day during the Santa Fe Trail Daze at Boise City.

verse relics of old-time Elk City as a surrey with fringe on top and a cowboy hat from the famous Story Hotel, signed by Williams Jennings Bryan, Buffalo Bill Cody, Al Jennings, Alvin York, Buck Jones and heavyweight champ Jess Willard.

On the house's second floor is the Beutler Brothers Rodeo Hall, monument to the men who put Elk City on the rodeo map by producing rodeo stock on their ranches near town. Museum hours are 10-5 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday and 2-5 on Sunday. Adults are charged \$2.50; children under 12 can tour free. (405) 225-2207.

21 Dewey County's first printing press. Early-day doctor's and dentist's equipment, including a primitive X-ray machine.

Arrowheads and scrapers and sandstone pipes. The bones of a mammoth dug up at Foss Reservoir. All this is on view at Clinton's Western Trails Museum, on the Interstate 40 Loop, at 2229 Gary Freeway. The museum is open from 9-5 Monday-Saturday and 1-5 on Sunday. (405) 323-1020.

If you'd like a little fishing with your history, Foss Reservoir, 12 miles north of I-40 on SH 44, offers angling for crappie, catfish and black bass. RV hookups, boat ramps, a swimming beach, camping sites and a marina are available at Foss State Park, at the southern end of the lake. The park's number is (405) 592-4433. Near the little town of Butler, at the junction of SHs 44 and 33, is the 8,100-acre Washita Wildlife Refuge. **OT**



TODAY IN OKLAHOMA

In this issue, *Oklahoma Today* continues a long-standing tradition—publication of the official photographs of Oklahoma's newly elected governor and lieutenant governor. This service allows their photos to be readily available for hanging in classrooms, libraries and offices of various kinds.

But for the first time both official photographs will be the same as four years ago. As everyone knows, Gov. Nigh is the first governor to succeed himself in Oklahoma. He is also the first lieutenant governor to be elected governor. Both Gov. Nigh and Lt. Gov. Bernard have made long-time, major contributions to state government. Congratulations and a tip of the Good Guy white hat to both of you. We're glad you're back.

And for our readers who already have their photos framed and hanging on the wall—go ahead and change. You probably need fresh prints anyway.

Beautiful, brilliantly colored wildflowers are what people frequently photograph and talk about after visits to northwestern Oklahoma in the spring. Typical of the dry western country, these flowers are so different from those found in the wetter mountainous regions of southeastern Oklahoma.

For a good view of vistas of wildflowers, Hal Richard, engineer for Division 6 of the state Transportation Department, suggests driving east of the Woodward County line on SH 15 through the Glass Mountains to the intersection with SH 60 just north of Fairview. Masses of gaillardia mixed with a variety of other native flowers grow beside the roadbeds.

Between Laverne and Shattuck along U.S. 283, during most springs, can be seen black-eyed susans, cowboy roses and rose mallow, Richard says.

The ball cactus, featured on the front cover, grows primarily in the Panhandle counties—Texas, Beaver and Cimarron.

Richard refused to predict whether this would be a good spring for wildflowers. "It all depends on the moisture," he says.

Wildflowers also grow on the grounds around the Indians and Pioneers Museum in Woodward, where

Jack Engleman planted them in 1965. He selected perennial wildflowers to bloom throughout the growing season, those that originally grew in the area to preserve the county's heritage.

"The month of May is best for seeing wildflowers," Richard says. "Look for them in little-used pastures in ranching country."

A good guidebook to take along to identify the blooms is *Roadside Flowers of Oklahoma* by Doyle McCoy of Cameron University, Lawton.

Prints of the Bert Seabourn painting, "Prairie Falcon," are still available at the Center of the American Indian, part of the expanding Kirkpatrick Center in Oklahoma City. Seabourn, who is known for his distinctive contemporary style of painting, exhibits throughout the country.

Funds from sale of the limited-edition prints will go toward designing new exhibit space, revolving shows and development of other Center programs.

The signed and numbered prints sell for \$100. They can be ordered from the Center at 2100 N.E. 52nd, Oklahoma City, OK 73111.

A bulletin from the good news/bad news department: Our Winter '82-'83 issue has been so popular that we are now officially *out* of them. Bound-volume buyers needn't worry; we've kept plenty back for that purpose. But we won't be able to fill any more orders for extra copies. So subscribers, hang on to that issue; it looks like we mailed you an instant collector's item last December.

BOOKS

WESTERN OKLAHOMA: A PHOTOGRAPHIC ESSAY, photographs by Daisy Descazes, text by William S. Banowsky; University of Oklahoma Press; \$30. As OU president Bill Banowsky says in his introduction, "It took guts, heartache, and bloodshed to tame this country. The terse truism applies: The cowards did not come; the weaklings never made it; only the strong survived."

French-born photographer Daisy

Descazes traveled that country, and saw it through new eyes: cowboys and powwows, mesas and plowed ground, morning mists and brilliant sunsets, racehorses and Herefords, old settlers' celebrations and confabs at the general store.

The 75 full-color photographs represent her vision of a rugged, picturesque country, where the sky blazes and the wind weathers wood—and people's faces—to intricate beauty.

MAN AND THE OKLAHOMA PANHANDLE, by Berenice Jackson, Jewel Carlisle and Iris Colwell; Menonite Press; \$20.40. Led by Berenice Jackson, the authors have amassed wide-ranging materials. Mrs. Jackson's introduction defines the scope: "We begin this treatise on the history of the Oklahoma Panhandle with the Pre-Cambrian Era and follow through to November 16, 1907—statehood."

Topics range from geological information to the area's human history, Indian and white. Short articles talk about everything from "New Finds in the Dakota Sandstone," by Truman Tucker, local expert on Cimarron County's prehistory, to the founding of Beaver City, the Autograph Cliff and the marking of the four corners of the Panhandle.

Perhaps the most interesting are the personal histories of Panhandle pioneers, from Boss Neff and James Kerrick Hitch, founder of the famous Hitch Ranch, to stonemasons, homemakers, school teachers, a judge and a gospel songwriter.

OKLAHOMA POLITICS: A HISTORY, by James R. Scales and Danney Goble; University of Oklahoma Press; \$24.95. They're all here. Jack Walton, who served up tons of barbecue and 12 jazz bands at his inauguration, but got impeached anyway. The unparalleled Alfalfa Bill Murray, who campaigned for the presidency promising "Bread, Butter, Bacon, and Beans." J. Howard Edmondson, who "prairie fired" his way to the governor's mansion by having a TV jingle spell his name.

Bob Kerr. Mike Monroney. Raymond Gary. Carl Albert. The Democrats. The Green Corn rebels. The Republicans. The Ku Klux Klan. All the people and forces that have shaped Oklahoma politics, in a book billed as "the only published history of the government in the Sooner State."

If you think political science is a dry subject, you don't know Oklahoma politics. Scales's and Goble's book is a



*In this circa-1907 photograph of Oklahoma City's Main Street, shot from its intersection with Harvey, looking east, the automobile has yet to overtake the buggy and the streetcar as the primary means of locomotion. As Jim Edwards and Hal Ottaway say in their comments on this scene in *The Vanished Splendor*, "Life marched on, but slowly, on this long-ago day in Oklahoma City."*

scholarly tale told in a casual, crackly style that "speaks to those Oklahomans . . . who seek to understand how state politics works or, on occasion, why it does not."

THE VANISHED SPLENDOR: POSTCARD VIEWS OF OKLAHOMA CITY, by Jim Edwards and Hal Ottaway; Abalache Book Shop Publishing Co.; \$15.95. Ah, nostalgia. Rare book dealers Edwards and Ottaway have collected 181 scenes guaranteed to jog the memories of older Oklahoma Citians, and to make younger ones homesick for a town they never knew.

Scenes show everything from the Carnegie Library, the Baum Building and the Baltimore Hotel to Delmar Garden, the 1911 street car strike and interiors of the Oklahoma Indian Curio Co. and the Lion Store. A commentary goes with each card.

Some of the buildings—the Skirvin, the Public Market, the Oklahoma Golf and Country Club—have survived to 1983. Many more live only in old photographs, in people's memories and now in *The Vanished Splendor*.

LETTERS

We wish to show our appreciation for the quality of the paper in your

Oklahoma Today and the wonderful improvement in the style of the magazine.

We are thankful that we have not seen the word "Okie" in your last four or five issues. As you know, the word was coined during the depression, referring to out-of-staters stranded on their way to California.

LeRoy Thomas
Escondido, CA

I was born in Oklahoma and lived there for 50 years, but I keep learning more about this beautiful state every time I read your very special *Oklahoma Today* magazine. (I'm still an "Okie" at heart and come back every year to visit relatives and friends).

I read the magazine from cover to cover—the photography, special paper, scenic pictures, editing, all done with such special care—I thoroughly enjoy every page of *Oklahoma Today*. Thanks for this preservation of Oklahoma history.

One sentence on page 27 of the winter edition bothers me. It says, "The waltz's 3/3 time"—. As a graduate of Oklahoma University with two degrees from the School of Fine Arts (one in piano), I've never heard of 3/3 time. I always thought waltz time was 3/4 time.

Alma Waller
Astor, FL

Editor's Note: Oklahoma's kings of southwestern swing were creative, all right, but I doubt if even they ever played a waltz in 3/3 time. Always glad to know that our readers really read us—even when they catch us in a slip-up.

I had expected someone to write you about the article you had on the Sooner Theater in Norman and the Woodward Theatre. I was in school at Norman when the Sooner was built. It was a grand thing and one of the first to be built after talking pictures came in. As I remember, Colbert Moore's mother built the theater and his two sisters worked in the ticket office. They were very pretty girls, blonde and personable. They were Chickasaw and, I believe, they were descended from Benjamin Franklin Colbert, who controlled a ford on Red River when Texans were driving Longhorns to Kansas. Colbert was a fraternity brother of mine.

I enjoy the magazine and commend you on the improvement you seem able to make each year.

I do have one complaint: The official Oklahoma road map shows the "South" Canadian River. I once used this expression and Dean Gittinger, who wrote the Oklahoma section of the Encyclopedia Britannica, informed me that there were two rivers, The Canadian, and the North Canadian.

Robert Duncan
San Antonio, TX

Editor's Note: We called the mapping section of the Department of Transportation and asked your question about the Canadians, and got the following answer: "There's always been a controversy over those names. For the state map, we went with the one that spells out their locations a little more clearly. . . . He's right, and we're right, too, which is a lot better than both of us being wrong."

Oklahoma Today is a fine publication. When I read it, I am proud of my Oklahoma heritage. But I have two complaints: The magazine isn't published often enough and it isn't long enough!

There are a lot of Okies in Las Cruces, and we meet more and more every day. I do enjoy reading *Oklahoma Today*!

Mrs. Frank Niles
Las Cruces, NM



A Creek freedman and his family, at Pleasant Grove in the Creek Nation, 1901. Courtesy of the Oklahoma Historical Society. This portrait is part of "Sodbusters, Sidewinders and Dandies — Two Decades in the Territories," an exhibit of rare photographs from the years 1887-1907. The display, which is sponsored by Tulsa's Western National Bank, can be seen at the bank, 4880 S. Lewis, through March 31st. The bank then plans to send the photos on the road as a traveling exhibit.

ART EXHIBITS

MARCH

- Jan 20- "Sodbusters, Sidewinders and Dandies — Two
- Mar 31 Decades in the Territories," Western National Bank, Tulsa
- Feb 4- "Romance and Realism: Spirit of the West,"
- Mar 10 Gilcrease, Tulsa
- Feb 27- "Fiberworks '83," Omniplex, Okla. City
- Mar 31
- 1-27 Young Talent in Oklahoma, Okla. Art Center, Okla. City
- 1-31 Robert Vickery Exhibit, Goddard Center, Ardmore
- 1-31 Archie Blackowl, Ben Buffalo & Charles Pratt, The Galleria, Norman
- 1-Apr 2 "19th Century American Landscape Painting: Selections from the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection," Okla. Art Center, Okla. City
- 1-Apr 5 "Graphic Works by Toulouse-Lautrec," Okla. Museum of Art, Okla. City
- 6-29 Elizabeth Hahn & Suzanne King, Arts Place II, Okla. City
- 6-Apr 9 "Wichita Memories," Museum of the Great Plains, Lawton
- 20-Apr 23 "From Generation to Generation: The Plains Apache Way," Public Library, Weatherford
- 20-Apr 25 Arts & Crafts Show, Five Tribes Museum, Muskogee

APRIL

- 1-30 Mike Larsen & Clayburn Straughn, The Galleria, Norman
- 3-May 8 Robert Vickery: Master of Illusion, Okla. Art Center, Okla. City
- 3-26 Tom Fricano, Arts Place II, Okla. City
- 10-June 26 "Nature in Suspension: Italian Still Life Through 3 Centuries," Philbrook, Tulsa

MAY

- 1-27 Tom & Louise Perkinson, Arts Place II, Okla. City
- 1-June 4 "From Generation to Generation: The Plains Apache Way," Museum of the Western Prairie, Altus
- 2-31 Thomas E. Mails, The Galleria, Norman
- 8-June 11 "Wichita Memories," Cherokee Strip Museum, Enid

15-June 20 The Milton Wichner Collection, Okla. Art Center, Okla. City

DRAMA

MARCH

- 9-13 "The Fantasticks," American Indian Theatre Co., Tulsa
- 11 "Tintypes," Community Center, Bartlesville
- 11-13, 15, "The Apple Tree" & "Working," Community Theatre, Lawton
- 17-19 "A Coupla White Chicks Sitting Around Talking," American Theatre Co., Tulsa
- 11-26 "Mame," Shortgrass Playhouse, Hobart
- 12-14, 17-19 "The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie," Okla. Theater Center, Okla. City
- 17-20, 24-27 "Morning's At Seven," Town & Gown Theatre, Stillwater
- 17-19, 26-28 "Cabaret," Muskogee Little Theatre, Muskogee
- 18-26 "Man of La Mancha," Community Playhouse, Norman
- 25-26 "Vanities," Theatre Guild, Community Center, Bartlesville
- 23-Apr 2 "Hotel Paradiso," Shawnee Little Theatre, Shawnee
- 30-Apr 1-3, "Bell, Book & Candle," Cabaret Supper Theatre, Ft. Sill
- 6-10, 13-16 "The Killing of Sister George," Actor's Theatre, Tulsa
- 31-Apr 3, 7-10 "The Last Meeting of the Knights of the White Magnolia," Gaslight Theatre, Enid
- 31-Apr 17 "Six Rooms Riv Vu," Jewel Box Theatre, Okla. City

APRIL

- 7-9 "Macbeth," Theatre Guild, Community Center, Bartlesville
- 8-17 "Death of a Salesman," Theatre Tulsa, Tulsa
- 14-16 "Life With Father," Ardmore Little Theatre, Ardmore
- 14-17 "Love, Sex & the I.R.S.," Southwest Playhouse, Clinton
- 15-16 "Belle Starr," 20th Century Players, Tahlequah
- 20-23 "Bye Bye Birdie," Community Theatre, Woodward
- 20-24 "The Night of January 16," Pottawatomie County Production Co., Tecumseh
- 21-May 1 "California Suite," Okla. Theater Center, Okla. City
- 22-May 7 "The Dresser," American Theatre Co., Tulsa
- 27,29 "The Night Thoreau Spent In Jail," Community Theatre, Lawton
- 28,30 "Strider, Story of a Horse," Community Theatre, Lawton

MAY

- 4-14 "The Effect of Gamma Rays of Man-In-The-Moon Marigolds," Shawnee Little Theatre, Shawnee
- 6-7 "Breath of Spring," Community Theatre, El Reno
- 6-14 "On Golden Pond," Community Playhouse, Norman
- 6-7, 12-14 "The Little Foxes," Ponca Playhouse, Ponca City
- 11-15 Original Script, American Indian Theatre Co., Tulsa
- 11-15, 18-22, "Something's Afoot," Cabaret Supper Theatre, Ft. Sill
- 25-28 "Blythe Spirit," Gaslight Theatre, Enid
- 12-14, 20-21, 27-28 "Oliver," Jewel Box Theatre, Okla. City
- 12-29 "Morning's At Seven," Community Theatre, Lawton
- 13-15, 17, 19-20 "Lil Abner," Theater Guild, Community Center, Bartlesville
- 19-21 "A Moon for the Misbegotten," Actor's Theatre, Tulsa
- 19-22, 26-29

ENTERTAINMENT CALENDAR

MUSIC/DANCE

MARCH

- 4 "Cosi Fan Tutte," Cimarron Circuit Opera, Sooner Theatre, Norman
- 5 "Con Amore," Ballet Oklahoma, Goddard Center, Ardmore
- 5 "Direct From Broadway," Pops Concert, Okla. City
- 5,10,12 "Der Rosenkavalier," Tulsa Opera, Tulsa
- 13 "A Symphony of Sound & Vision," Bartlesville Symphony, Community Center, Bartlesville
- 13 Cleveland String Quartet, Harwelden & Performing Arts Center, Tulsa
- 13,15 Andre Watts, Okla. Symphony, Okla. City
- 17 Andre Watts, Tulsa Philharmonic, Tulsa
- 19 "Cosi Fan Tutte," Cimarron Circuit Opera, Wewoka
- 19 "Fascinating Rhythms," Texas Opera Theater, Community Center, Bartlesville
- 20 Tulsa Philharmonic, Concert on the Mall, Southroads, Tulsa
- 23 Maynard Ferguson, Seretean Center, OSU, Stillwater
- 26 "Cosi Fan Tutte," Cimarron Circuit Opera, NWOSU, Alva
- 26 The Fifth Dimension, Pops Concert, Tulsa
- 26-27 Pablo Casals Trio, Harwelden & Performing Arts Center, Tulsa
- 27 The Mozartean Players, Concerttime, Performing Arts Center, Tulsa
- 27,29 Mark Peskanov, Okla. Symphony, Okla. City
- 29 "Hansel & Gretel," Cimarron Circuit Opera, USAO, Chickasha

APRIL

- 2 "Doc Severinsen — Tonight!," Pops Concert, Okla. City
- 4,11 Young People's Concerts, Tulsa Philharmonic, Tulsa Zoo
- 6 "Cosi Fan Tutte," Cimarron Circuit Opera, Eufaula
- 9 "Cosi Fan Tutte," Cimarron Circuit Opera, Lawton
- 10,12 John DeVore, Okla. Symphony, Okla. City
- 16 Cimarron Circuit Opera, Medieval Fair, Norman
- 23 Doc Severinsen, Philharmonic, Lawton
- 24,26 Miriam Fried, Okla. Symphony, Okla. City
- 25 "Motets," & "Mass in E Minor," Canterbury Choral Society, Our Lady's Church, Okla. City
- 30 Spring Gala, Civic Ballet, Community Center, Bartlesville
- 30-May 5,7 "Madame Butterfly," Tulsa Opera, Tulsa

MAY

- 1 Symphony in the Square, Tulsa Philharmonic, Utica Square, Tulsa
- 6 Opera Gala, Cimarron Circuit Opera, Tahlequah
- 8 "For the Young," Bartlesville Symphony, Community Center, Bartlesville
- 14 Opera Gala, Cimarron Circuit Opera, Theatre North, Tulsa
- 15,17 Boris Bloch, Okla. Symphony, Okla. City
- 20 Ella Fitzgerald, Pops Concert, Okla. City
- 30 Memorial Day Concert, Tulsa Philharmonic, Mohawk Park, Tulsa

FAIRS & FESTIVALS

MARCH

- 12 3rd Annual Southwest Oklahoma Marathon and Sports Festival, Lawton

SPRING 1983

26-27 Waurika Rattlesnake Hunt, Waurika

APRIL

- 3 Wichita Mountains Easter Sunrise Service, Wichita Wildlife Refuge, Lawton
- 9-24 Azalea Festival, Honor Heights Park, Muskogee
- 14-16 Pioneer Days Celebration, Okemah
- 15-17 Cheyenne-Arapaho Old Settlers Reunion, Clinton
- 16 Annual Gate Tour, Gate
- 19-23 89'ers Day Celebration, Guthrie
- 19-24 Festival of the Arts, Civic Center Park, Okla. City
- 20-23 Cimarron Territory Celebration, Beaver
- 22-23 Frontier Days Celebration, Carnegie
- 22-24 Shortgrass Rattlesnake Derby, Mangum
- 23-24 Central Okla. Arts & Crafts Show, Heart of Okla. Expo Center, Shawnee

MAY

- 6-7 No Man's Land Pioneer Days, Guymon
- 7 Kolache Festival, Prague
- 14 Strawberry Festival, Stilwell
- 19-22 Walleye Rodeo, Canton
- 19-22 Mayfest '83, Tulsa
- 20-21 Rooster Day Celebration, Broken Arrow
- 21 Okie Relays, Texhoma
- 28 Gage Marathon, Gage
- 28 Bigheart Day, Barnsdall
- 28-29 Italian Festival, McAlester

Creative types by the hundreds, mimes, clowns, cooks and school kids all get into the arts act at Oklahoma City's Festival of the Arts. Named one of the top 100 events in North America, this year's festival will feature works by 200 artists and craftspeople, two stages with continuous entertainment, 22 food booths and special children's activities like the Art Field, where youngsters can create their own art. Dates are April 19-24; the place is Civic Center Park, downtown.



